



Red Riding Hood's House

Department of Education



# Writing Map of Development

**Addressing Current Literacy Challenges**

First steps. Writing map of development

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Role Play Phase
In this phase, writers emulate adult writing by experimenting with marks to represent written language. Role Play writers are beginning to understand that writing is used to convey meaning or messages; however, as understandings about sound-symbol relationships are yet to develop, their messages are not readable by others. Role Play writers rely heavily on topic knowledge to generate text.
<b>USE OF TEXTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Assigns a message to own written and drawn symbols.</li><li>◆ Demonstrates awareness that writing and drawing are different.</li><li>◆ Knows that print carries a message, but may 'read' writing differently each time.</li></ul> <b>CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ States purpose or audience for own writing, e.g. This is a card for Dad.</li><li>◆ Identifies and talks about characters from literary texts.</li><li>◆ Identifies and talks about people and ideas in informational texts.</li></ul> <b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Begins to demonstrate an awareness of directionality, e.g. points to where print begins.</li><li>◆ Uses known letters or approximations of letters to represent writing.</li></ul> <b>PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Relies upon personal experiences as a stimulus for 'writing'.</li></ul>
<b>ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.</li><li>■ Foster students' enjoyment of writing.</li><li>■ Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. using known letters, composing messages.</li><li>■ Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.</li></ul> <b>USE OF TEXTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Expose students to a range of text forms pointing out purpose, e.g. recipes tell how to make something.</li><li>■ Provide opportunities for students to 'write' a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.</li><li>■ Model the connection between oral and written language, e.g. what is said can be written down.</li><li>■ Demonstrate that written messages remain constant.</li><li>■ Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.</li><li>■ Teach students the metalanguage associated with writing, and encourage its use.</li></ul> <b>CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Discuss that writing has a purpose and an intended audience.</li><li>■ Draw students' attention to decisions writers make when composing texts.</li><li>■ Draw students' attention to the way characters are represented in literary texts.</li><li>■ Draw students' attention to the way people and ideas are represented in informational texts.</li></ul> <b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Provide opportunities for students to develop and use new vocabulary.</li><li>■ Begin to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. personally significant words.</li><li>■ Build phonological awareness and graphophonic knowledge, such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- recognising, matching and generating rhymes</li><li>- listening for sounds in words</li><li>- linking letter names with their sounds, focusing on the regular sound.</li></ul></li><li>■ Teach students the conventions of print.</li><li>■ Model one-to-one correspondence between written and spoken words.</li><li>■ Model the composition of simple sentences, including the use of punctuation, e.g. capital letters, full stops.</li></ul> <b>PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. topic knowledge, sound-symbol relationships.</li><li>■ Teach strategies used throughout the writing process, e.g. connecting.</li><li>■ Teach spelling strategies, e.g. sounding out.</li><li>■ Model simple publishing alternatives, e.g. text and illustration.</li><li>■ Model how to find required information in texts.</li><li>■ Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.</li></ul>
<b>Experimental Phase</b>
In this phase, writers are aware that speech can be written down. Experimental writers rely on familiar topics to generate a variety of texts such as greeting cards, lists and letters. They demonstrate an understanding of one-to-one correspondence by representing most spoken words in their written texts. These words may consist of one, two or three letters, and reflect their developing understanding of sound-symbol relationships.
<b>USE OF TEXTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Experiments with familiar forms of writing, e.g. lists, captions, retells.</li><li>◆ Uses writing with the intention of communicating a message.</li><li>◆ Demonstrates awareness that print contains a constant message, e.g. recalls the 'gist' of the message over time.</li><li>◆ With assistance, finds information in texts appropriate to purpose or interest.</li></ul> <b>CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Provides reasons why people write, e.g. to remember, to say thank you.</li><li>◆ States the purpose and audience of own writing, e.g. I am going to write to grandma to say ...</li><li>◆ Talks about how characters and events are represented in literary texts.</li><li>◆ Explains why people or ideas are represented in a particular way when composing informational texts.</li><li>◆ Talks about how people and ideas are represented in informational texts.</li></ul> <b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Writes using simple language structures, e.g. I like ..., I see ...</li><li>◆ Demonstrates one-to-one correspondence between written and spoken word, e.g. word-pointing when reading back own writing.</li><li>◆ Begins to demonstrate understanding of the conventions of print.</li><li>◆ Identifies the letters of the alphabet by name or by common sounds.</li></ul> <b>PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Draws upon semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge when writing, e.g. topic knowledge, sound-symbol relationships.</li><li>■ Uses a small range of strategies throughout the writing process, e.g. self-questioning.</li><li>■ Uses a limited range of strategies throughout the writing process, e.g. connecting.</li><li>■ Talks or draws as a means of planning before writing.</li><li>■ Uses a limited range of strategies to spell, e.g. sounding out.</li><li>■ Decides how own text will be presented.</li></ul>
<b>ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.</li><li>■ Foster students' enjoyment of writing.</li><li>■ Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. spelling, composing sentences.</li><li>■ Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.</li></ul> <b>USE OF TEXTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Continue to expose students to a range of text forms, pointing out purpose and audience.</li><li>■ Provide opportunities for students to compose a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.</li><li>■ Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.</li><li>■ Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with writing, and encourage its use.</li></ul> <b>CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Discuss the purpose and audience of a range of text forms.</li><li>■ Discuss some of the decisions writers make when composing texts, and provide opportunities for students to do the same.</li><li>■ Draw students' attention to the different ways characters or events are represented in literary texts.</li><li>■ Draw students' attention to the different ways people or ideas are represented in informational texts.</li><li>■ Highlight and encourage the use of simple devices that writers use to influence readers, e.g. print size, colour.</li></ul> <b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Provide opportunities for students to develop and use new vocabulary.</li><li>■ Continue to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. high-frequency words.</li><li>■ Build students' knowledge about words and word parts, e.g. plurals.</li><li>■ Continue to build phonological awareness and graphophonic knowledge, such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- segmenting words into sounds</li><li>- linking letters with their regular sounds</li><li>- representing sounds heard in words with letters written in the order they are heard</li><li>- recognising that the same letter represents different sounds.</li></ul></li><li>■ Reinforce conventions of print.</li><li>■ Teach the use of commonly used punctuation, e.g. question marks, exclamation marks.</li><li>■ Teach the use of parts of speech, e.g. nouns, verbs.</li><li>■ Demonstrate the construction of sentences as units of meaning.</li><li>■ Model how to group information that is related to compose a text.</li><li>■ Model how to group students' knowledge about different text forms, e.g. procedures instruct, procedures have steps.</li></ul> <b>PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. word order, text organisation.</li><li>■ Continue to teach strategies used throughout the writing process, e.g. self-questioning.</li><li>■ Continue to teach spelling strategies, e.g. chunking.</li><li>■ Model simple ways to plan for writing, e.g. talking, drawing.</li><li>■ Model simple ways to proofread and edit, e.g. adding words or punctuation.</li><li>■ Continue to model simple publishing alternatives, highlighting purpose.</li><li>■ Model how to find, record and organise information from texts, e.g. alphabetical order, simple retrieval chart.</li><li>■ Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.</li></ul>

Early Phase
Early writers produce a small range of texts that exhibit some of the conventions of writing. Texts such as retells, reports and emails are composed to share experiences, information or feelings. Early writers have a small bank of frequently used words that they spell correctly. When writing unknown words, they choose letters on the basis of sound, without regard for conventional spelling patterns.
<b>USE OF TEXTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Attempts a small range of familiar texts, either teacher-directed or self-selected.</li><li>◆ With assistance, finds information in texts and records through drawing or writing key words.</li></ul> <b>CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Explains the purpose of a small range of familiar text forms, e.g. jokes are to entertain.</li><li>◆ Talks about the purpose of a piece of writing and the ideas that need to be included.</li><li>◆ Explains why characters or events are represented in a particular way when composing literary texts.</li><li>◆ Explains why people or ideas are represented in a particular way when composing informational texts.</li><li>◆ Imitates the use of simple devices used in texts, e.g. print size, colour.</li></ul> <b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Experiments with words drawn from a variety of sources, e.g. literature, media, oral language of peers.</li><li>◆ Spells and uses a small bank of known words correctly.</li><li>◆ Knows all letters by name, and their common sounds.</li><li>◆ Knows simple letter patterns and the sounds they represent, e.g. sh, ch, ee.</li><li>◆ Writes simple sentences using correct punctuation.</li></ul> <b>PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Draws upon semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge when writing, e.g. text organisation, word order.</li><li>■ Uses a small range of strategies throughout the writing process, e.g. chunking, sounding out.</li><li>■ Talks or draws as a means of planning before writing.</li><li>■ Begins to proofread and edit own writing when directed, e.g. deleting words, adding punctuation.</li><li>■ Creates a published text that is beginning to reflect the intended purpose.</li></ul>
<b>ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.</li><li>■ Foster students' enjoyment of writing.</li><li>■ Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. planning, editing, spelling.</li><li>■ Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.</li></ul> <b>USE OF TEXTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Continue to expose students to a range of text forms, and discuss the features of each.</li><li>■ Provide opportunities for students to compose a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.</li><li>■ Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.</li><li>■ Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with writing, and encourage its use.</li></ul> <b>CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Discuss the purpose and audience of a range of text forms.</li><li>■ Continue to discuss some of the decisions writers make when composing texts, and provide opportunities for students to do the same.</li><li>■ Encourage students to make choices about how to represent characters and events when composing literary texts.</li><li>■ Encourage students to make choices about how to represent people and ideas when composing informational texts.</li><li>■ Model and encourage the use of devices, and discuss how they influence meaning.</li><li>■ Model to students how to use writing to influence change about social issues that concern them.</li></ul> <b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Provide opportunities for students to develop, refine and use new vocabulary.</li><li>■ Continue to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. topic words, signal words.</li><li>■ Build students' knowledge about words and word parts, e.g. contractions, suffixes.</li><li>■ Continue to build phonological awareness and graphophonic knowledge, such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- purpose, e.g. reports describe</li><li>- text structure, e.g. reports list details</li><li>- text organisation, e.g. reports use headings</li><li>- language features, e.g. reports use present tense.</li></ul></li><li>■ Reinforce conventions of print.</li><li>■ Continue to build knowledge of different text forms, emphasising:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- purpose, e.g. explanations explain phenomena</li><li>- text structure, e.g. explanations use cause and effect</li><li>- text organisation, e.g. explanations include diagrams or cutaways</li><li>- language features, e.g. explanations use signal words to show cause/effect.</li></ul></li></ul> <b>PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. grammatical knowledge, cultural knowledge.</li><li>■ Continue to teach strategies used throughout the writing process, e.g. determining importance.</li><li>■ Continue to teach spelling strategies, e.g. using visual memory.</li><li>■ Teach students to plan for writing in a variety of ways, e.g. brainstorming, classifying.</li><li>■ Teach students how to use proofreading and editing to refine their writing.</li><li>■ Continue to model a variety of publishing alternatives, highlighting the purpose and audience.</li><li>■ Teach students how to find, record and organise information from texts, e.g. note making, note taking.</li><li>■ Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.</li></ul>
<b>ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.</li><li>■ Foster students' enjoyment of writing.</li><li>■ Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. new forms, devices, vocabulary.</li><li>■ Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.</li></ul> <b>USE OF TEXTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Continue to expose students to a range of text forms, and discuss the features of each.</li><li>■ Provide opportunities for students to craft a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.</li><li>■ Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.</li><li>■ Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with writing, and encourage its use.</li></ul> <b>CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Discuss some of the reasons writers choose one particular text form over others.</li><li>■ Encourage students to explain their decisions about:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- text form selected</li><li>- information and ideas included or omitted</li><li>- language used.</li></ul></li><li>■ Teach students how to represent characters and events to create specific effects in literary texts.</li><li>■ Teach students how to represent people and ideas to create specific effects in informational texts.</li><li>■ Teach students the use of devices, and discuss how they may influence the audience, e.g. flashback, illustration size.</li><li>■ Encourage students to use writing to influence change about social issues that concern them.</li><li>■ Discuss writers' knowledge, experiences and perspective influence the composition of a text.</li></ul> <b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Provide opportunities for students to develop, refine and use new vocabulary.</li><li>■ Continue to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. less common words, subject-specific words.</li><li>■ Continue to build students' knowledge about words and word parts, e.g. prefixes, suffixes, homophones.</li><li>■ Continue to build students' graphophonic knowledge, such as using less common sound-symbol relationships, e.g. ocean, nation, fashion.</li><li>■ Extend students' knowledge of the use of punctuation, e.g. apostrophes, quotation marks.</li><li>■ Extend students' knowledge and use of parts of speech and their relationships, e.g. noun-pronoun agreement.</li><li>■ Teach students to construct and manipulate sentences, e.g. expanding, reducing, transforming.</li><li>■ Model how to group together sentences with similar information.</li><li>■ Continue to build knowledge of different text forms, emphasising:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- purpose, e.g. explanations explain phenomena</li><li>- text structure, e.g. explanations use cause and effect</li><li>- text organisation, e.g. explanations include diagrams or cutaways</li><li>- language features, e.g. explanations use signal words to show cause/effect.</li></ul></li></ul> <b>PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. world knowledge, linguistic features.</li><li>■ Continue to teach strategies used throughout the writing process, e.g. synthesising.</li><li>■ Continue to teach spelling strategies, e.g. using analogy.</li><li>■ Continue to teach students to plan for writing in a variety of ways, e.g. graphic organisers, storyboards.</li><li>■ Continue to teach students how to use proofreading, editing and revising to refine their writing.</li><li>■ Encourage students to select and use publishing formats that best suit purpose and audience, e.g. web page, slide show, poster.</li><li>■ Continue to teach students to find, record and organise information from texts, e.g. using graphic organisers.</li></ul>



# Overview of the First Steps Writing Map of Development

Global Statement

Key Indicators

Major Teaching Emphases

Conventional Phase	Proficient Phase	Accomplished Phase
<p><b>USE OF TEXTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Crafts a wide range of texts, demonstrating control over all elements.</li> <li>◆ Composes texts by retrieving, recording and organising information appropriate to purpose and audience.</li> </ul> <p><b>CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Explains why a particular text form may be more appropriate to achieve a purpose for an intended audience.</li> <li>◆ Adjusts the language and ideas to include in own texts to suit purpose and audience.</li> <li>◆ Selects ways to represent characters and events to create specific effects in literary texts.</li> <li>◆ Selects ways to represent people and ideas to create specific effects in informational texts.</li> <li>◆ Uses devices when attempting to influence the reader, e.g. flattery, humour.</li> </ul> <p><b>CONVENTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Selects vocabulary to create precise meaning.</li> <li>◆ Spells and uses a large bank of known words correctly.</li> <li>◆ Knows and uses less common letter patterns correctly, e.g. aisle, reign.</li> <li>◆ Writes a variety of simple, compound and complex sentences using correct punctuation.</li> <li>◆ Develops a paragraph by writing a topic sentence and including supporting information.</li> </ul> <p><b>PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Draws upon semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge when writing, e.g. world and cultural knowledge, linguistic features.</li> <li>◆ Selects appropriate strategies to use throughout the writing process.</li> <li>◆ Selects appropriate strategies to spell unknown words.</li> <li>◆ Plans for writing in a range of ways, e.g. graphic organisers, storyboard.</li> <li>◆ Independently proofreads, edits and revises own writing.</li> <li>◆ Selects appropriate publication formats to enhance audience understanding and impact.</li> </ul> <p><b>ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.</li> <li>■ Foster students' enjoyment of writing.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. manipulating forms, use of devices.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.</li> </ul> <p><b>USE OF TEXTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Continue to expose students to a range of text forms, and discuss the features of each.</li> <li>■ Provide opportunities for students to craft a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to experiment with the manipulation of elements to compose a text.</li> <li>■ Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.</li> <li>■ Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with writing, and encourage its use.</li> </ul> <p><b>CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provide opportunities for students to explain their choice of text, information and ideas included or omitted, and devices used.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to represent characters and events to create specific effects in literary texts.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to represent people and ideas to create specific effects in informational texts.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to select devices to influence a particular audience.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to use writing to influence change about social issues that concern them.</li> <li>■ Continue to discuss how writers' and readers' knowledge, experiences and perspective affect the composition and interpretation of texts.</li> </ul> <p><b>CONVENTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provide opportunities for students to develop, refine and use new vocabulary.</li> <li>■ Continue to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. technical terms.</li> <li>■ Continue to build students' knowledge about words and word parts, e.g. derivatives and word origins.</li> <li>■ Extend students' knowledge of the use of punctuation, e.g. colons, hyphens.</li> <li>■ Extend students' knowledge and use of parts of speech and their relationships, e.g. active and passive verbs.</li> <li>■ Continue to teach students to construct and manipulate a variety of sentences.</li> <li>■ Teach students different ways to develop cohesive paragraphs.</li> <li>■ Continue to build knowledge of different text forms.</li> <li>■ Build knowledge of texts where combinations and adaptations of text structure and organisation have been used.</li> </ul> <p><b>PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. orthographic knowledge, cultural knowledge.</li> <li>■ Continue to teach strategies used throughout the writing process.</li> <li>■ Consolidate known spelling strategies.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to discuss the effectiveness of various ways they plan for writing.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to use proofreading, editing and revising to refine their writing.</li> <li>■ Continue to encourage students to select and use publishing formats that best suit purpose and audience, e.g. website, video, portfolio.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to evaluate their effectiveness in retrieving, recording and organising information from texts and to critique own texts.</li> <li>■ Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.</li> </ul>	<p><b>USE OF TEXTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Controls the crafting of a large repertoire of texts.</li> <li>◆ Critiques own texts by evaluating the information retrieved, recorded and organised.</li> </ul> <p><b>CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Makes critical choices about the composition of a text to suit different purposes and to influence audiences.</li> <li>◆ Consciously provokes positive or negative responses through the representation of characters and events in literary texts.</li> <li>◆ Consciously provokes positive or negative responses through the representation of people and ideas in informational texts.</li> <li>◆ Selects devices designed to enhance impact or to influence a particular audience.</li> </ul> <p><b>CONVENTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Selects vocabulary for its shades of meaning and effect.</li> <li>◆ Has accumulated an extensive bank of known words that are spelt and used correctly.</li> <li>◆ Is aware of the many letter patterns that are characteristic of the English spelling system.</li> <li>◆ Uses grammatically complex sentences appropriately and correctly.</li> <li>◆ Organises paragraphs logically to form a cohesive text.</li> </ul> <p><b>PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Consciously adds to semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge as required, when writing.</li> <li>◆ Selects appropriate strategies to use throughout the writing process.</li> <li>◆ Accurately spells, using a multistep approach.</li> <li>◆ Plans for writing in efficient and effective ways.</li> <li>◆ Refines writing to enhance impact.</li> <li>◆ Makes critical choices about the publication of texts to suit different purposes and to create impact.</li> </ul> <p><b>ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.</li> <li>■ Foster students' enjoyment of writing.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. creating hybrid texts, refining texts.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.</li> </ul> <p><b>USE OF TEXTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Encourage students to explore and discuss a wide range of literary and informational texts.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to craft a range of literary and informational texts for authentic purposes and audiences.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to manipulate elements to craft a range of texts, e.g. hybrid texts, multimodal texts.</li> <li>■ Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to independently use the metalanguage associated with writing.</li> </ul> <p><b>CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Continue to provide opportunities for students to discuss the choices they have made when crafting texts, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– text form</li> <li>– devices used to influence</li> <li>– the representation of people and ideas</li> <li>– the representation of characters and events.</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Encourage students to use writing to influence change about social issues that concern them.</li> <li>■ Explore how the ideologies of the writer and the reader combine to create an interpretation of the text.</li> </ul> <p><b>CONVENTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Encourage students to take responsibility for extending, refining and using new vocabulary.</li> <li>■ Reinforce to students their obligation to use spelling and grammar that is appropriate to the context.</li> <li>■ Continue to teach students how to compose cohesive paragraphs and coherent texts.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to build their knowledge of different text forms as required.</li> <li>■ Continue to explore texts where combinations and adaptations of conventions have been used.</li> </ul> <p><b>PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge.</li> <li>■ Consolidate strategies used throughout the writing process.</li> <li>■ Consolidate spelling strategies.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to be selective in the way they plan for writing.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to refine their texts holistically to ensure they are effective.</li> <li>■ Encourage students to be selective in their choice of publication formats.</li> <li>■ Continue to encourage students to evaluate the effectiveness in retrieving, recording and organising information from texts and to critique own texts.</li> <li>■ Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.</li> </ul>	<p><b>USE OF TEXTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Controls the crafting of a large repertoire of texts.</li> <li>◆ Critiques own texts by evaluating the information retrieved, recorded and organised.</li> <li>◆ Is able to write using a dispassionate style that conceals personal bias.</li> <li>◆ Is able to write using an emotive style that makes ideas more appealing.</li> <li>◆ Writes with conviction, using a strong personal voice.</li> <li>◆ Uses the metalanguage associated with writing.</li> </ul> <p><b>CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Makes critical choices about the composition of a text based on an analysis of the purpose and the intended audience.</li> <li>◆ Consciously provokes positive or negative responses through the representation of characters and events in literary texts.</li> <li>◆ Consciously provokes positive or negative responses through the representation of people and ideas in informational texts.</li> <li>◆ Selects devices designed to enhance impact or to influence a particular audience.</li> <li>◆ Recognises how one's values, attitudes and beliefs impact on the composition of a text.</li> <li>◆ Accommodates or resists the likely expectations of particular audiences.</li> </ul> <p><b>CONVENTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Deliberately selects words to convey meaning economically and precisely.</li> <li>◆ Accurately spells a wide range of words.</li> <li>◆ Consciously selects sentence structure and associated punctuation to achieve impact.</li> <li>◆ Organises ideas and information clearly, sustaining coherence throughout texts.</li> <li>◆ May choose to deviate from the conventions of writing to enhance impact.</li> </ul> <p><b>PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Consciously adds to semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge as required, when writing.</li> <li>◆ Selects appropriate strategies to use throughout the writing process.</li> <li>◆ Accurately spells, using a multistep approach.</li> <li>◆ Competently uses an extensive range of processes to plan, draft and refine writing.</li> <li>◆ Makes critical choices about the publication of texts based on an analysis of the purpose and the intended audience.</li> </ul> <p><b>Major Teaching Emphases and Teaching and Learning Experiences</b></p> <p>are not provided for this phase, as Accomplished writers are able to take responsibility for their own ongoing writing development.</p>

# CHAPTER 1

# About Writing

This chapter focuses on what is important about writing and writing instruction. It outlines the basis of the *First Steps* Writing Map of Development and *First Steps* Writing Resource Book (2nd edn). The Writing Map of Development (formerly known as the Writing Developmental Continuum) is designed to help teachers map their students' progress; it offers suggestions for teaching and learning experiences that will assist with further development in writing.

In the *First Steps* resource, each strand of Reading, Writing, Viewing, and Speaking and Listening is broken down into smaller categories that are referred to throughout as aspects. The following table summarises how these aspects combine to capture the nature of writing.

Aspect	Writing is . . .
<i>Use of Texts:</i> what students do with texts to convey meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>translating inner speech into symbols to communicate with an audience over time and/or distance</li><li>composing meaning in a wide range of printed and electronic texts</li></ul>
<i>Contextual Understanding:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>how the context affects the choice of language and the mode, medium and format used</li><li>how the context affects the interpretation of text</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a social practice used to accomplish a wide range of purposes across a range of cultural and situational contexts</li><li>used to influence and manipulate others, often to maintain or challenge existing power</li></ul>
<i>Conventions:</i> structures and features of texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>encoding written language using letters, words, sentences, grammar, and knowledge of the social context</li></ul>
<i>Processes and Strategies:</i> how students read, write, view, speak and listen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>the application of knowledge and understandings to compose printed and electronic texts using cyclic processes</li></ul>

## The Evolution of the Teaching of Writing

Over the past four decades different approaches to teaching writing have been taken. Each new approach has been informed by a growing understanding of the process of writing and the changing views about the purposes of writing. Each subsequent approach has taken insights from the previous ones, as well as incorporating new thinking. Harris, McKenzie, Fitzsimmons and Turbill (2003) have summarised some major shifts in thinking about writing instruction.

- 1 *Writing as Production or Encoding* — an emphasis on teaching spelling, handwriting, punctuation and grammar in isolation, and all as prerequisites to the task of writing.
- 2 *Writing as Creativity* — a shift in emphasis to writing as a form of self-expression: composition became ‘creative writing’.
- 3 *Writing as a Process* — a shift in emphasis from the product to the ways texts are developed: a focus on teaching the processes proficient writers use when creating text.
- 4 *Writing as Genre* — an emphasis on the systematic, explicit instruction in specific genres of writing: modelling, joint construction and independent writing were used to scaffold students’ control of genres.

Over time, these approaches have contributed to a comprehensive and balanced method to support students’ writing development. Effective writing instruction has been a result of the emergence of best practices across all of the above approaches.

### 5 *Writing within the Context of Setting and Culture*

The latest refinement has been to give greater emphasis to the consideration of context, especially setting and culture (Harris, McKenzie, Fitzsimmons & Turbill 2003). This approach acknowledges that all writing happens in a situational and sociocultural context to fulfil a writer’s purpose. It is important that in the classroom students are exposed to many real-world situations and purposes for using writing. The goal for students is to understand and use writing in real-life settings to communicate their ideas, share information, stimulate thinking, formulate questions, or influence policy and action.

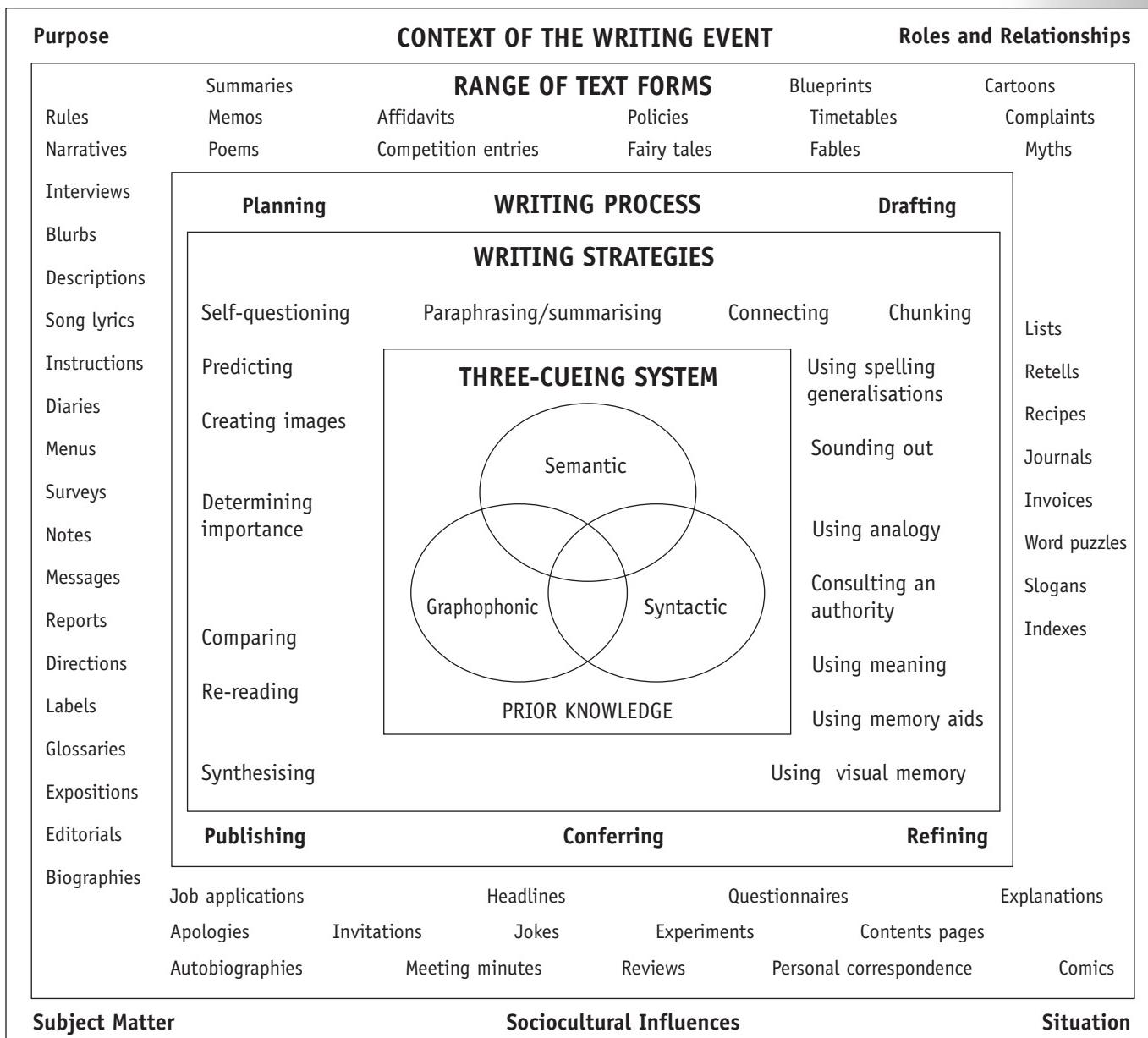
## A Multidimensional Model of Teaching Writing

This resource provides a model of teaching writing that reflects a culmination of all the approaches previously outlined. The changes

in emphases across these approaches have led to cumulative refinements of the way writing is taught. The *First Steps* materials support teachers in implementing an approach that acknowledges the need to build prior knowledge and learn the skills necessary for writing. The multidimensional model shown in Figure 1.1 represents writing as a process and writing as genre, and acknowledges the importance of sociocultural perspectives to the teaching of writing.

## *Building Prior Knowledge*

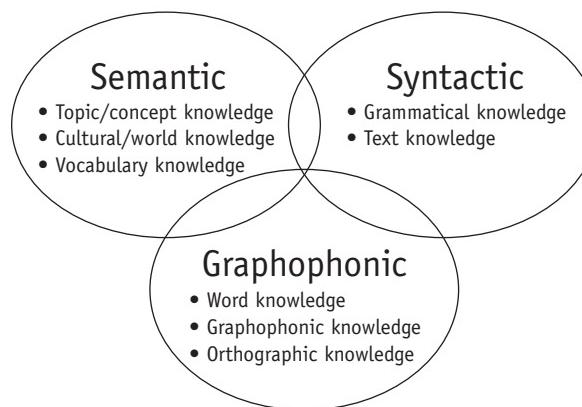
The centre of Figure 1.1 represents the Three-Cueing System (Pearson 1976). Just as efficient readers draw upon a range of information sources when comprehending texts, efficient writers also draw on a range of information sources when composing texts.



## Figure 1.1 A multidimensional approach to teaching writing

These sources are often referred to as semantic, syntactic and graphophonic cues. Each cue is equally important, and they are used simultaneously before, during and after composing texts. Collectively they make up a student's prior knowledge, or schema.

It is critical that students from a very early age be provided with opportunities to build knowledge and skills within each cue. This is achieved by helping them to focus on elements such as building knowledge about concepts and topics, expanding cultural and world knowledge, building vocabulary, understanding words and word parts, building grammatical understandings, exploring graphophonic relationships, and expanding text-form knowledge.



**Figure 1.2 Knowledge within the cues**

## ***Using Writing Strategies***

Another important element in supporting writing development is the explicit teaching of the strategies related to crafting texts, including those used in spelling unfamiliar words (see p. 5).

Strategies are most effectively introduced through teaching practices such as modelling, sharing and guiding, and through opportunities for students to apply their use in meaningful contexts. Strategies can be introduced, used and applied by students as they plan, draft, confer, refine and publish texts for a range of social purposes. The control of a wide range of strategies is imperative for successful writing.

## ***Using Writing Processes***

Writing processes are the 'how' of writing. There is not, as is sometimes thought, one 'process approach'. There are many useful writing processes that feed into a recursive cycle. The number of steps and stages that are documented may vary, but usually reflect

Writing strategies include:

self-questioning sounding out predicting chunking  
creating images using spelling generalisations  
determining importance using analogy inferring  
consulting an authority comparing using meaning  
re-reading using memory aids synthesising visualising  
paraphrasing/summarising connecting

a similar outcome. Consciously or not, all writers go through a series of stages — or use predictable paths — to create a text.

Effective writers understand that writing is a process that occurs over time; it may vary from person to person or according to the purpose and audience of the writing event.

Teaching inexperienced writers the processes of writing provides them with a structure they can follow to help them craft text from beginning to end. The important factor is to help students to understand that the stages are not fixed. Writers move back and forth between stages, making the process fluid and dynamic, and some writing may not go through all stages.

This resource presents a process for writing using the stages shown in Figure 1.3 (p. 6).

### ***Crafting a Wide Range of Text Forms***

A section of Figure 1.1 represents a sample of the wide range of text forms that writers may compose, depending on the context of the writing event. The goal or desired outcome for students is that they can write for a range of purposes, using electronic and print media as well as the conventions appropriate to the audience, purpose and context. Many texts that writers compose to convey their meanings will be hybrid texts that combine features from a variety of modes, media, forms and formats (see Figure 1.4, p. 7).

It is becoming increasingly important that the texts students compose are produced through both pen and paper and electronic media. Electronic texts have unique characteristics that make them different from conventional printed texts. Becoming literate in electronic writing will involve writers in becoming acquainted with — and learning to compose — non-linear, non-sequential text, and in using organisational features that are typical of electronic texts. The typical features of hypertexts include pop-up menus, hyperlinks

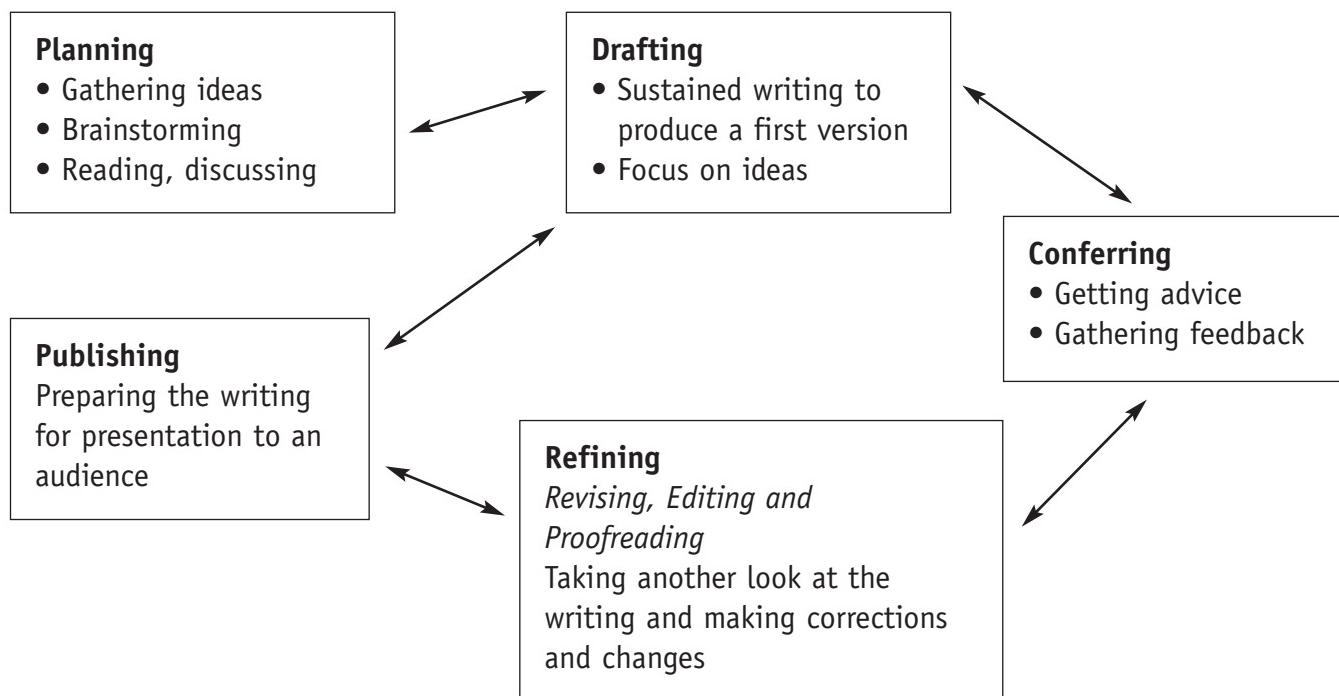


Figure 1.3 Stages of the process of writing

and sidebars. Electronic texts can also incorporate a wide range of animated, flashing or moving visual displays, sound effects or video. Writers need to learn the conventions of how to incorporate these elements in prose to create effective multimedia texts.

### ***The Context of the Writing Event***

Context refers to the immediate situational circumstances as well as to the broader sociocultural influences that impact on a writing event. Writers do not operate as solitary individuals, but as members of a social/cultural group. This influences what and how they write, and how their writing is perceived.

It is important for writers to understand that when they compose texts, several factors will influence their choice of language and guide them to decide what is important.

- The purpose of the communication
- Knowledge of the subject matter
- The roles of the writer and the audience, and relationships between them
- The physical situation in which the writing takes place
- Sociocultural beliefs, values and assumptions

## A Multidimensional Model of Teaching Writing

### An Overview of Texts

Tending towards Literary Text      Tending towards Informational Text

Modes	PURPOSES						Instruct	FORMATS
	Entertain	Recount	Socialise	Inquire	Describe	Persuade		
MEDIA	Narrative, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• fairy tale</li><li>• fable</li><li>• fantasy</li></ul> Poem, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• haiku</li><li>• limerick</li><li>• free verse</li><li>Song lyric</li><li>Word puzzle</li><li>Joke</li></ul>	Biography Autobiography Diary Journal Retells: direct or indirect experiences Minutes of meetings Review	Invitation Apology Message Note Personal correspondence Announcement	Survey Questionnaire Interview	Report Label Menu Contents page Index Glossary Bibliography Blurb Description	Exposition Menu Job application Editorial Headlines Competition entry Slogan Advertisement	Explanation Affidavit Memo Rules Policy Journal Timetable Complaint	Directions Timetable Recipe Manual Invoice List Experiment Summons Blueprint Instructions Map
Written				Chat room Conversation				CD-ROM Text message Email Fax Card
Spoken	Joke Story Song lyric	Conversation	Greeting Apology Telephone conversation	Interview	Oral report	Debate Discussion	Oral directions	Performance Speech
Visual	Talking book Song lyric		Voice-mail message Chat room		Talk-back radio Song lyric			Audio cassette Radio Television CD-ROM Video DVD
Electronic	Play Theatre		Picture book Photo			Logo Advertisement Catalogue	Timeline Graph Table Flow chart Map	Clothing Tattoo Gesture
Printed	Painting Photograph Cartoon						Road sign	Button Flyer Poster Magazine Graffiti Sticker Magnets
Live	Television Sitcom Film						Documentary News report	CD-ROM Video cassette Web page DVD

Figure 1.4

## CHAPTER 2

# Understanding the Writing Map of Development

The Writing Map of Development validates what teachers know about their students and is organised to help them link assessment, teaching and learning.

Although in practice literacy is an amalgam of the four strands of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Viewing, individual maps are necessary to represent the complexity of each strand.

Breaking each strand into the aspects of Use of Texts, Contextual Understanding, Conventions, and Processes and Strategies provides further opportunity for a more specialised analysis. The organisation of the Writing Map of Development into aspects provides a practical framework for looking at assessment, teaching and learning, and reflects current beliefs about how writing is defined.

The Writing Map contains behaviours, suggested teaching emphases and a range of teaching and learning experiences at each phase of development. Together these features help teachers make informed, strategic decisions about how to support students' literacy development.

## How the Map Is Organised

There are seven phases in the Writing Map of Development.

- Role Play
- Experimental
- Early
- Transitional
- Conventional
- Proficient
- Accomplished

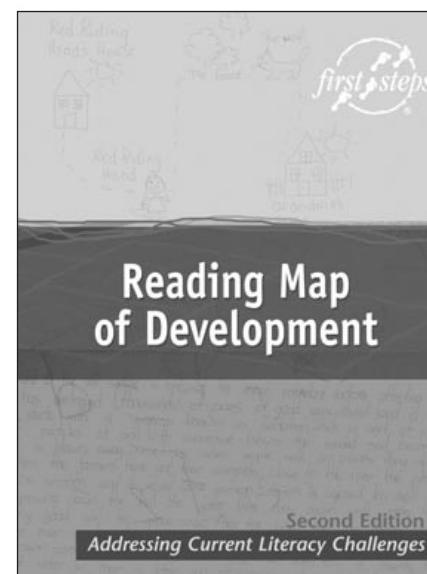


Figure 2.1

## How the Map Is Organised

The same organisational framework is used for each phase.

**PHASE NAME**  
The Phase Name is a description of a writer in that phase.

**GLOBAL STATEMENT**  
The Global Statement:

- summarises the general characteristics of the typical writing behaviours in that phase;
- reflects students' current beliefs about writing;
- describes the types of texts that students may create.

**CHAPTER 7**  
**Transitional Writing Phase**

Figure 7.1  
**Global Statement**

Transitional writers show increasing control over the conventions of writing such as punctuation, spelling and text organisation. They consider audience and purpose when selecting ideas and information to be included in texts. They compose a range of texts, including explanations, narratives, brochures and electronic presentations. Writing shows evidence of a bank of known words that are spelt correctly. Transitional writers are moving away from a heavy reliance on sounding out and are beginning to integrate visual and meaning-based strategies to spell unknown words.

Figure 2.2 The Transitional Writing Phase Name and Global Statement

**INDICATORS**  
Indicators:

- are organised under the aspect headings:
  - Use of Texts
  - Contextual Understanding
  - Conventions
  - Processes and Strategies
- describe writing behaviours.

Key Indicators:

- signify a conceptual leap in critical understandings;
- describe behaviours that are typical of a phase.

Other Indicators:

- describe behaviours that provide further details of the phase.

**Transitional Writing Phase**

**Transitional Writing Indicators**

**Use of Texts**

- Composes a range of texts but may not fully control all elements.
- Composes texts by finding, recording and organising information appropriate to purpose.
- Includes essential information and brief elaboration on personal experience.
- Uses rhyme, rhythm and repetition for effect, where appropriate.
- Demonstrates knowledge of differences in organisation, structure and language features of a range of texts when writing.
- Writes simple conclusions with some attempt to support them.
- Establishes place, time and situation in literary texts.
- Imitates complications from well-known stories.
- Compares texts that move beyond drawing on personal experience.
- Shows evidence of personal voice.
- Uses the metalanguage associated with writing, e.g. procedure, root, punctuation.

**Contextual Understanding**

- Explains the purpose and audience of a range of texts.
- Selects ideas to include in own text to suit purpose and audience.
- Discusses alternatives about how to represent people and events when composing literary texts.
- Discusses alternatives about how to represent information in non-literary texts.
- Experiments with the use of devices, e.g. repetition of words or phrases.
- Sometimes represents characters or people in stereotypical ways, e.g. the brave prince, the wicked witch.
- Considers the audience, and includes some background information.
- Can select an appropriate form of writing from a small range.
- Chooses topics likely to appeal to a particular audience.

**Conventions**

- Variables to add interest.
- Spells and uses an increasing bank of known words correctly.
- Knows less common letter patterns and the sounds they represent, e.g. ion, the.
- Writes simple forms of simple and compound sentences, using correct punctuation.
- Groups related information sometimes using capital letters for paragraphing conventions.
- Uses a range of appropriate conjunctions, e.g. but, because, so, if.
- Uses appropriate subject-verb agreements.
- Writes in past tense.
- Writes in both first and third person.
- Usually maintains appropriate tense for the text form, e.g. timeless present tense, past tense.

Note: The terms 'writing' and 'writing' encompass the use of traditional tools, such as pen and paper, as well as the use of electronic tools, such as word processors and multimodal tools. The term 'text' refers to both literary and informational texts, and includes visual, spoken or written texts. These may be printed, electronic, live or multimodal.

Figure 2.3 The Transitional Writing Phase Indicators

## Understanding the Writing Map of Development

**MAJOR TEACHING EMPHASSES (MTEs)**

Major Teaching Emphases:

- are organised under the following headings:
  - Environment and Attitude
  - Use of Texts
  - Contextual Understanding
  - Conventions
  - Processes and Strategies
- are suggestions of appropriate priorities for teaching at each phase;
- are designed to help teachers support and challenge students' current understandings.

**Major Teaching Emphases**

**Environment and Attitude** (see p. 280)

- Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.
- Foster students' enjoyment of writing.
- Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. new forms, devices, vocabulary.
- Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.

**Use of Texts** (see p. 190)

- Continue to expose students to a range of text forms, and discuss the features of each.
- Provide opportunities for students to craft a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.
- Continue to teach students the mechanics of writing, associated with writing, and encourage its use.

**Contextual Understanding** (see p. 203)

- Discuss some of the reasons writers choose one particular text form over others.
- Encourage students to explain their decisions about:
  - text form selected
  - information and ideas included or omitted
  - language used
- Teach students how to represent characters and events to create specific effects in literary texts.
- Teach students how to represent people and ideas to create specific effects in informational texts.
- Teach students the use of devices, and consider the way they influence the audience, e.g. flashback, illustration size.
- Encourage students to use writing to influence change about issues that concern them.
- Discuss how writers' knowledge, experiences and perspective influence the composition of a text.

**Conventions** (see p. 213)

- Provide opportunities for students to develop, refine and use new vocabulary.
- Continue to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. less common words, subject-specific words.

**Processes and Strategies** (see p. 225)

- Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. word meaning, spelling patterns.
- Continue to teach strategies used throughout the writing process, e.g. synthesising.
- Continue to teach spelling strategies, e.g. visual analogies.
- Continue to teach students to plan for writing in a variety of ways, e.g. graphic organisers, storyboards.
- Continue to teach students how to use proofreading, editing and revising to refine their writing.
- Encourage students to select and use publishing formats that best suit their purpose and audience.
- Continue to teach students to find, record and organise information from texts, e.g. using graphic organisers.
- Model the processes of the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.

Figure 2.4 The Transitional Writing Phase Major Teaching Emphases

**TEACHING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

- Teaching and Learning Experiences are organised under the following headings:
  - Environment and Attitude
  - Use of Texts and Learning Experiences
  - Contextual Understanding
  - Conventions
  - Processes and Strategies
- Each of these is divided into two sections: Teaching Notes and Involving Students.
  - Teaching Notes unpack the intent of the Major Teaching Emphases.
  - Involving Students contains a selection of developmentally appropriate activities that support the Major Teaching Emphases.

**Teaching and Learning Experiences**

**ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE**

**Major Teaching Emphases**

- Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.
- Foster students' enjoyment of writing.
- Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. new forms, devices, vocabulary.
- Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.

**Teaching Notes**

A classroom community that supports and nurtures writers is one that is supportive and challenging. Writers come to terms with the combination of the writing process; there need to be many opportunities with new aspects of writing. The focus for developing attitudes towards writing as well as a supportive Transitional writers is organised under the following:

- Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment
- Fostering Enjoyment of Writing
- Encouraging Experimentation
- Writing as a Social Practice

**Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment**

A supportive environment is one in which both and the culture of the classroom are considered. A climate is one in which students have opportunities to combine printed, spoken, visual and digital processes contribute to students' willingness to write.

**Physical Environment**

It is beneficial to jointly construct a print-rich environment for Transitional writers. A diverse range of print, creative and digital resources can support the writing process.

**Involving Students**

**1 Interviewing**

participating in Interviewing supports Transitional writers in building information they can use when making decisions about how characters or people are represented.

Interviewing involves pairs role playing an interview situation. One student takes the role of a character or person, while the other asks the questions. The student role playing the character or person is required to respond orally to the questions. Students conducting the interview need to create questions to find out about the character. It is important to model the types of questions that will help students focus on finding out details about the character or person's actions, feelings and behaviours.

Students would benefit from watching and analysing several interviews prior to this activity and then discussing the types of questions and answers that elicited the most information about the interviewees.

- Organise students in pairs. Have them develop a plan for creating a collaborative text. This plan should include a list of characters or people.
- Each pair selects a main character or person from their list.
- They work together to develop appropriate questions to elicit information about the chosen character or person. Questions might relate to likes, dislikes, fears, phobias, hobbies, habits, hopes, dreams, strengths and relationships.
- Provide time for the students to conduct their interview.
- Provide them with a format they can use to record decisions about how the character or person will be represented in their text.
- Provide time for them to write the text, incorporating the decisions made about the character or person.

Character or Person: <i>Dawnie Hoff</i>
Physical Description: - of average height and weight - brown hair - friendly
Likes: - caring - caring for her M. friends - caring for her dog, Max
Hobbies: - knitting - knitting for her friends - knitting for charity
Dislikes: - being alone - being left out
Fears: - afraid of: mice, bugs, heights
Interests: - playing sport especially basketball - playing computer games
Strengths: - friendly - easy to get along with
Hopes and Dreams: - to be a firefighter and save other people

Figure 2.5 Transitional Writing — Teaching and Learning Experiences

Figure 2.6 Transitional Writing — Involving Students

## How to Use the Writing Map of Development

**SUPPORTING PARENTS PAGES**

Supporting Parents pages:

- provide support for teachers in helping parents or carers assist their child's writing development at home;
- contain:
  - a general description of writers in the phase;
  - a list of Parent Cards that include activities appropriate for the home setting.

Each Parent Card is available on the Writing CD-ROM, and may be copied for distribution to parents.

**Transitional Writing Phase**

### Supporting Parents of Transitional Writers

#### GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF TRANSITIONAL WRITERS

Transitional writers are able to write a variety of texts such as explanations, narratives and brochures. They consider the purpose and the audience when making decisions about what to include. Transitional writers are developing control over spelling, punctuation, and the way texts are organised. They are beginning to use a range of strategies to spell unknown words.

#### Supporting Transitional Writers in the Home

Transitional writers will benefit from a range of experiences in the home setting. Ideas for providing appropriate experiences are available on Parent Cards located on the *First Steps* Writing CD-ROM. Teachers can select appropriate cards for each Transitional writer and copy them for parents to use at home.

**Parent Cards**

<b>1</b> General Description and How to Support Transitional Writers	<b>6</b> Developing Vocabulary and Spelling
<b>2</b> Writing and Reading Links	<b>7</b> Building Vocabulary and Spelling Knowledge through Games
<b>3</b> Supporting the Writing Process	<b>8</b> Supporting Project Work — Accessing and Using Information
<b>4</b> Supporting Punctuation and Grammar	
<b>5</b> Building Understandings about Different Types of Writing	

Also available on the Writing CD-ROM is a parent-friendly version of the Writing Map of Development.

Figure 2.7 Transitional Writing — Supporting Parents

## How to Use the Writing Map of Development

The purpose in using the Writing Map of Development is to link assessment, teaching and learning in a way that best addresses the strengths and needs of all students. The process used to achieve this may vary from teacher to teacher; it may be dependent on a teacher's familiarity with *First Steps*, the data already collected on students' writing development, the time of the school year, or the school's implementation plan.

This section outlines a possible process (see Figure 2.8). As teachers become more familiar with linking assessment to teaching and learning, strategic decisions about using the map can be made. Some may focus on placing students on the map; for example, how many students and which ones; using which indicators, which recording sheet and over what period of time. Others may focus on the selection of Major Teaching Emphases and Teaching and Learning Experiences for individual, small-group and whole-class teaching.

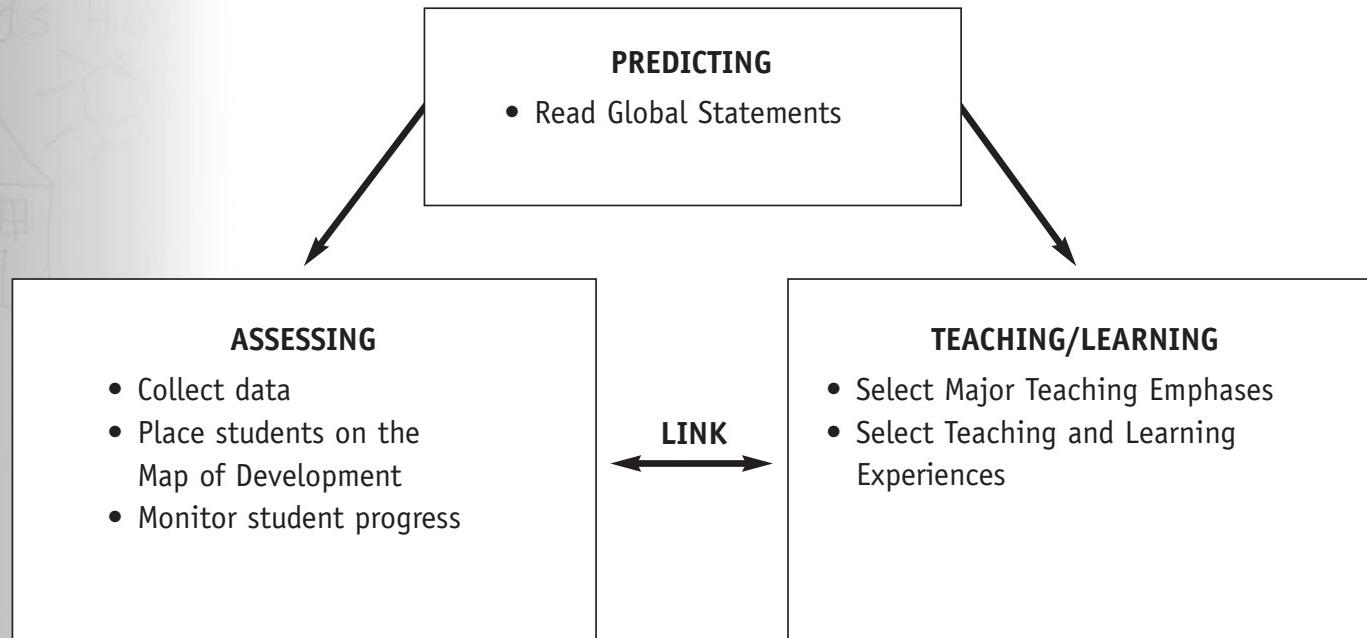


Figure 2.8 A possible process for using the Writing Map of Development

### ***Suggested Process for Using the Writing Map of Development***

#### ***Predict***

Many teachers begin to use the Writing Map of Development by making predictions about each student's phase of development. Predictions are made by reading through the Global Statements. Teachers are then able to use this information, together with their professional judgement, to make an educated guess in each case. The initial predictions, recorded on a class profile sheet (see Figure 2.9), allow teachers to immediately begin linking assessment, teaching and learning.

These predictions can be used to begin selecting Major Teaching Emphases from appropriate phases for whole-class, small-group or individual teaching. The MTEs will then guide the selection of teaching and learning experiences to support students' development.

It is critical that teachers begin to collect data to confirm or amend their initial predictions.

#### ***Collect Data***

The Indicators on the Writing Map of Development provide a focus for data collection, which can be carried out on a continual basis using a range of tools in a variety of contexts. A balance of conversation, observation and analysis of products will ensure

## How to Use the Writing Map of Development

First Steps Writing Map of Development: Class Profile Sheet						
Year Level:		Teacher:				
	Role Play	Experimental	Early	Transitional	Proficient	Accomplished
1		Bethan	Annaliese	Howard		
2		Louisa	Sara-Jane	Philip		
3		Kade	Ben	Janette		
4		Mahmoud	James	Denise		
5		Brenda	Vikki	Yvonne		
6		Seth	Hope			
7		Daniel	Greg			
8			Allan			
9			Matthew			
10			Stephen			
11			Rebecca			
12			Monica			
13			Max			
14			Marilyn			
15			Alison			
16			Grace			
17						
18						
19						
20						
21						
22						
23						
24						
25						
26						

Major Teaching Emphases can be selected from a range of phases.

- Whole-class focus, e.g. Transitional Phase
- Small-group focus, e.g. Early or Conventional Phase
- Individual student focus

Figure 2.9 Sample of a class profile

information is gathered across all four aspects. Encouraging the involvement of students and parents or carers in the data collection will provide further information about students' writing development and interests (see Chapter 3).

### Place Students on the Writing Map of Development

The Writing Map of Development can be used as a framework for recording a wide range of information gathered about students' writing behaviours. A number of recording formats have been designed, and have been successfully used by teachers. Samples of these are provided on the Writing CD-ROM.

## **Understanding the Writing Map of Development**

Information about the behaviours can be recorded in a range of ways. The development of a system, such as highlighting or dating, is an individual or school preference. Marking the selected recording sheets in some way is referred to as 'placing the student/s on the Map of Development'.

There are a number of points that should be considered when placing students on the Map of Development.

- Indicators for each phase should be interpreted in conjunction with the Global Statement of the phase and with the indicators from the surrounding phases.
  - With the exception of Role Play writers, students are considered to be in the phase where they exhibit *all* Key Indicators.
  - When students display *any* of the indicators of the Role Play writing phase, they are considered to be in that phase.
  - For most students in the class, it will only be necessary to record information about the Key Indicators.
  - It is important that any student behaviours (indicators) recorded have been displayed more than once and in a variety of contexts.

**FIRST STEPS WRITING MAP OF DEVELOPMENT: INDIVIDUAL STUDENT PROFILE SHEET KEY INDICATORS ONLY**

**Ross Schultz**

Student's Name:

EARLY	TRANSITIONAL
<b>USE OF TEXTS</b>	<b>USE OF TEXTS</b>
Attempts a small range of familiar texts, either teacher-directed or self-selected.	Creates a range of texts but may not fully control all elements.
With assistance, finds information in texts and records through drawing or writing key words.	Creates texts by finding, recording and organising information appropriate to purpose.
<b>CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING</b>	<b>CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING</b>
Explains the purpose of a small range of familiar text forms, e.g. <i>jokes are to entertain</i> .	Explains the purpose and audience of a range of text forms.
Talks about the purpose of a piece of writing and the ideas that need to be included.	Selects ideas to include in own text to suit purpose and audience.
Explains why characters or events are represented in a particular way when creating literary texts.	Discusses alternatives about how to represent characters and events when creating literary texts.
Explains why people or information is represented in a particular way when creating informational texts.	Discusses alternatives about how to represent people and ideas when creating informational texts.
Imitates the use of simple devices used in texts, e.g. <i>print size, colour</i> .	Experiments with the use of devices, e.g. <i>repetition of words or phrases</i> .
<b>CONVENTIONS</b>	<b>CONVENTIONS</b>
Experiments with words drawn from a variety of sources, e.g. <i>literature, media, oral language of peers</i> .	Varies vocabulary to add interest.
Spells and uses a small bank of known words correctly.	Spells and uses an increasing bank of known words correctly.
Knows all letters by name and their common sounds.	Knows less common letter patterns and the sounds they represent, e.g. <i>tion, ph</i> .
Knows simple letter patterns and the sounds they represent, e.g. <i>sh, ch, ee</i> .	Writes a variety of simple and compound sentences using correct punctuation.
Writes simple sentences using correct punctuation.	Groups related information together, sometimes without regard for paragraphing conventions.
<b>PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES</b>	<b>PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES</b>
Draws upon semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge when writing, e.g. <i>text organisation, word order</i> .	Draws upon semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge when writing, e.g. <i>vocabulary knowledge, text structure knowledge</i> .
Uses a small range of strategies throughout the writing process, e.g. <i>self-questioning</i> .	Uses an increasing range of strategies throughout the writing process, e.g. <i>determining importance</i> .
Uses a small range of strategies to spell unknown words, e.g. <i>chunking, sounding out</i> .	Uses an increasing range of strategies to spell unknown words, e.g. <i>visualising</i> .
Talks or draws as a means of planning when writing.	Begins to organise ideas before writing, e.g. <i>brainstorming, drawing, jotting</i> .
Begins to proofread and edit own writing when directed, e.g. <i>deleting words, adding punctuation</i> .	Proofreads, edits, and revises own writing when directed.
Creates a published text that is beginning to reflect the intended purpose.	Plans for and creates a published text that reflects the intended purpose and needs of the audience.

Teacher: **Dale** Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

**Figure 2.10** Sample of a student profile

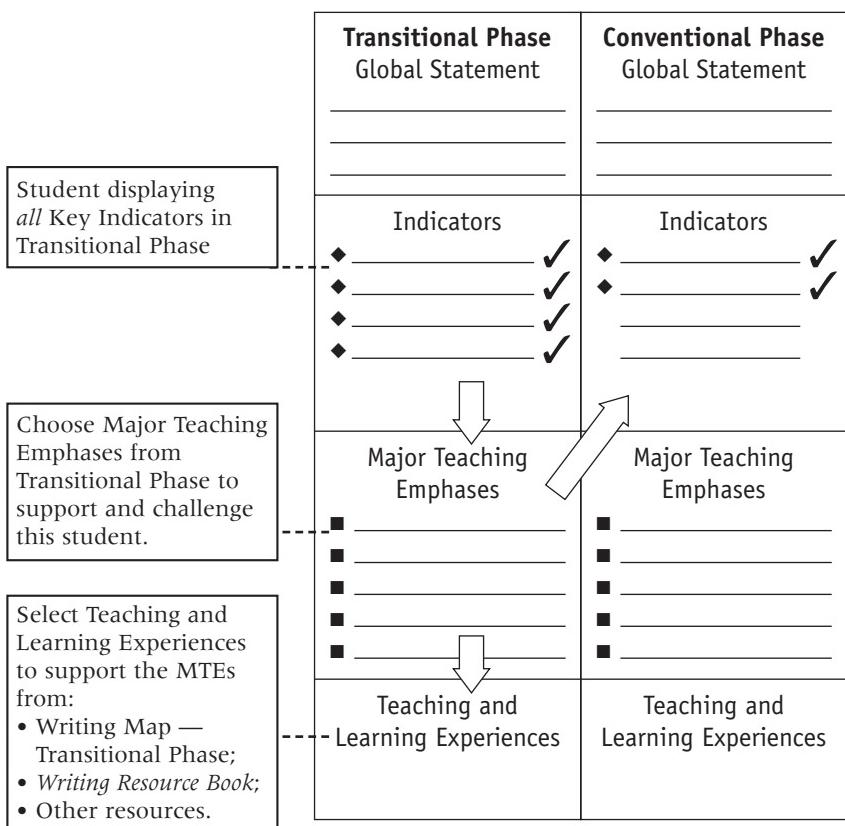


## Link Assessment, Teaching and Learning

Placing students on the Writing Map of Development is just the beginning of the assessment, teaching and learning cycle. It is crucial that teachers continue to analyse student profiles so that they will be better able to plan appropriate teaching and learning experiences.

Once a student's phase of development has been determined, the Major Teaching Emphases provide the first step in linking assessment, teaching and learning. These are provided at each phase of development, and suggest appropriate teaching priorities for students 'in that phase'.

Once Major Teaching Emphases have been selected for an individual, small-group or whole-class focus, appropriate Teaching and Learning Experiences can be chosen from the corresponding phase in the Writing Map. The *First Steps Writing Resource Book* and other teacher resource material can provide further support for the chosen MTEs.



**Figure 2.11 Choosing appropriate Major Teaching Emphases and Teaching and Learning Experiences**

## **Monitor Student Progress**

The Writing Map of Development can be used to monitor students' progress over time. It is crucial that teachers update the profile of each student often enough to direct teaching and learning in the classroom so that student needs are constantly being met.

Decisions about the monitoring and updating process are a personal choice. Some teachers choose to focus on four or five students at a time; some choose to focus on the indicators from a particular aspect, while others focus on students from a particular phase. These options help to make the monitoring and updating process manageable.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### ***Can I start using the Major Teaching Emphases and the Teaching and Learning Experiences before I have placed students on the Writing Map of Development?***

Yes. The best way to start is to predict the phase of development of each student based on the Global Statement. Once this has been completed, you are able to choose the Major Teaching Emphases from the predicted phase. You can then select appropriate Teaching and Learning Experiences and use these as a springboard for collecting data in an ongoing manner.

### ***Does a student have to display all Key Indicators of a phase to be 'in that phase'?***

Yes. The phase in which the student is displaying all the Key Indicators is considered to be the student's phase of development.

There is, however, an exception to this when looking at students in the Role Play writing phase. When students display any of the indicators in the Role Play phase they are considered to be in that phase.

### ***Do I need to place all students on the Map of Development?***

It is important to be clear about your purpose for placing students on the Writing Map of Development and this will guide your decision about which students to choose. You may decide that for some students it is sufficient to predict using the Global Statement and then use this information to select Major Teaching Emphases and Teaching and Learning Experiences. For others in the class, you may gather information only about Key Indicators to create individual profiles. For a selected few, you may gather information about both Key Indicators and Other Indicators to create more detailed records of development.

## **How much evidence do I need to collect before an indicator can be marked or highlighted?**

It is important to have sufficient evidence to determine whether a student consistently displays a particular behaviour. The most effective way to do this is to see the behaviour displayed several times in a range of contexts. Your professional judgement will help you decide whether the evidence you have is strong enough to mark the indicator. When in doubt, leave it out and wait until you have confirmation that an indicator is being displayed.

## **When would I use Other Indicators?**

The Other Indicators list additional behaviours you may notice *some* students displaying. You may choose to use them when you are looking for more detailed information about a student.

## **How long should a student be in a phase?**

There is no definitive time span. Some students may progress quickly through a phase, while others remain in the same phase for a length of time. Each student is unique, and no two developmental pathways will be the same. Providing developmentally appropriate teaching and learning experiences will assist students to move along the Writing Map of Development.

## **How often do I need to update each student's progress on the Writing Map of Development?**

Data collection and analysis is an ongoing process, and the frequency of the collation of this information onto the map is your decision. However, it is crucial that you consider updating the profiles often enough to drive teaching and learning in the classroom so that student needs are constantly being met.

## **From which phase do I choose the Major Teaching Emphases?**

Major Teaching Emphases are chosen from the phase in which a student is displaying all Key Indicators; for example, if a student displays all the Key Indicators in the Transitional Phase, the Major Teaching Emphases come from the Transitional Phase. The Major Teaching Emphases are designed to support students' current understandings and challenge them to begin displaying behaviours from the next phase.

## **Within a phase, which Major Teaching Emphases do I choose?**

Any of the MTEs in the phase where a student displays all the Key Indicators will be appropriate. To select the most appropriate, you may take into consideration:

- the student's interests, strengths and needs;
- any 'gaps' in previous teaching;
- the grouping arrangements;
- links to other literacy strands and what is being taught in other learning areas.

The Major Teaching Emphases are designed to be revisited many times across all learning areas. This selection and revisiting process continues until a student consistently displays all Key Indicators in the next phase.

### ***How do I use the Student Self-Assessment pages?***

The Student Self-Assessment pages are designed to be completed by the students. These pages can be completed over time either independently or with teacher support. This could happen during student conferences or reflection sessions, or as part of an interview. These pages provide a springboard for individual goal-setting. They can be found on the Writing Map of Development CD-ROM in Chapter 3 — Collecting Data to Assess Writing Development.

### ***Why are there no activities for students in the Processes and Strategies aspect in the Writing Map of Development?***

The activities for the Processes and Strategies aspect are in the *Writing Resource Book*. The rationale for this is that all writers make use of a range of processes and strategies that are not hierarchical and are therefore not phase-specific. The activities in the *Writing Resource Book* can be applied across a range of phases to develop efficient use of the processes and strategies being introduced or consolidated.

### ***Can I use the Map of Development with students who have English as an Additional Language?***

Yes, the map can be used with EAL students. By using the map to record a student's behaviours, patterns will emerge indicating strengths and needs. The behaviours exhibited could be across a number of phases; therefore, it may not be appropriate to identify an EAL student as being in one particular phase. In order to tailor instruction appropriately, you may need to select Major Teaching Emphases from more than one phase of the map (see *Linking Assessment Teaching and Learning*, Chapter 4, for further information about *First Steps* and Diversity).

However, there are different considerations for students who are print-literate in another language and those who are not.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### *For students who are print-literate in a language other than English*

Students who already speak, read and write languages other than English may already be aware that each language has its own features. Some of these understandings can be transposed from one language to another; others cannot. This means that such students may have a well-developed understanding of language as a system, but not in those aspects of language that are peculiar to English.

When using the Writing Map of Development with these students, consider the following.

- Their thinking and cognitive ability usually far outstrips their ability to read and write in English.
- Their understanding of oral texts is usually more advanced than is their ability to express themselves in oral or written English.
- Their competence in using social language may mask difficulties they are experiencing with the language of learning.
- They tend to use elements of their own language as a bridge to learning the English language system, e.g. code-mixing, where words, phrases or sentences are borrowed from the first language to help clarify meaning.
- Their competencies may vary according to the similarity or difference between their home language and specific aspects of English.
- Phonological differences between their home language and English can affect spelling development, e.g. they may have difficulty distinguishing between sounds, and therefore may omit letters or letter clusters when writing.

### *For those not print-literate in a language other than English*

Young students who have not learnt to read and write in any language seem to follow a pattern of development similar to that of those learning to read and write English as their first language.

Older students may progress in a similar way; however, they may make conceptual leaps and progress more quickly than their younger counterparts. This is due to their maturity and greater cognitive development. They may not display behaviours from the Role Play and Experimental phases.

## CHAPTER 3

# Collecting Data to Assess Writing Development

Chapter 6 of *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning* provides detailed information about beliefs of assessment and evaluation that underpin the *First Steps* resource. The data-collection tools listed in that chapter are generic, and can be applied to all areas of literacy. The focus of this chapter is on how data-collection tools can be used specifically to make judgements about students' writing development. The ideas and suggestions provide support for teachers when placing students on the *First Steps* Writing Map of Development.

Planning for success in writing requires teachers to find out what individual students know and can do. It is useful to ask the following questions.

- What information is needed at an aspect level?
- What are the most efficient and valid ways to collect the information and who should collect it?
- How can the information be collected?
- How can the information be recorded?
- How can I use the information to make judgements and select appropriate foci for future teaching?
- How can the information be shared with others?

## What Are the Most Efficient and Valid Ways to Collect Writing Information?

Different data-collection tools will provide different perspectives on writing performance, so it is important to use a range. The type of data-collection tools selected will also depend upon the aspect for which information is to be collected — Use of Texts, Contextual Understandings, Conventions, or Processes and Strategies. Decisions teachers make about which assessment tools to use, and how and when to use them, impact on the quality of the judgements made. These decisions can also impact on the messages given to students about 'what counts' in writing. It is important to develop efficient and valid ways of assessing writing, and to involve students, parents or carers, and other teachers in the process of collecting and recording data.

## What Are the Most Efficient and Valid Ways to Collect Writing Information?

Data can be collected in several ways for each aspect of writing and can be grouped under the following broad headings.

- Focused Observation
- Writing Products
- Conversations

While it is acknowledged that data can be gathered in many different ways for each of the aspects, the following table illustrates how one teacher selected a variety of data-collection tools. This helps to ensure that judgements can be made about all four aspects of writing development and that a variety of data-collection tools are used. Further information about the use of each tool can be found throughout this chapter.

### Data-collection tools selected to make judgements about different aspects of writing

ASPECTS OF WRITING	Use of Texts	Contextual Understanding	Conventions	Processes and Strategies
ASSESSMENT TOOLS				
<b>Focused observation</b>				
Informal	✓			✓
Formal	✓			✓
<b>Writing products</b>				
Logs				
Personal goal-setting	✓	✓	✓	✓
Writing journals				✓
Two Stars and a Wish				✓
Student self-assessment formats				✓
Writing samples	✓		✓	
Have-A-Go pads			✓	
Spelling-error analysis			✓	
Surveys and questionnaires		✓		
Tests			✓	
<b>Conversations</b>				
Conferences		✓		✓
Interviews		✓		✓

## Focused Observation

Powerful assessment takes place when teachers are observing students at work in regular classroom activities. Assessment need not be a separate procedure; it can happen as part of everyday teaching and learning. Observation involves much more than simply watching or listening to students in the classroom. Observation involves the systematic collection of observable data and the analysis of that information. It is one way of finding out what students know and can do in writing. It allows teachers to assess specific strategies students use — or understandings they demonstrate — either during specific writing experiences or in other learning areas. Focused observation in writing can be carried out in either an informal or a formal way — or in both.

### 1 Informal Observations

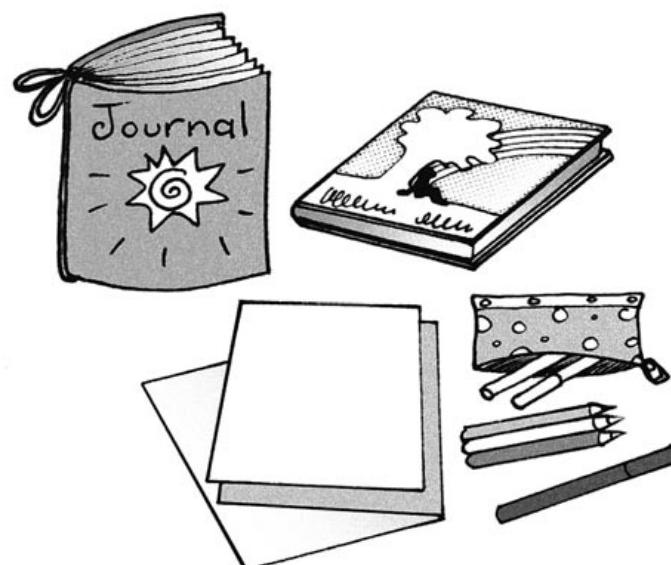
Informal observations are unplanned. The teacher simply notes writing behaviours as they naturally happen.

### 2 Formal Observations

Formal observations are planned, with a predetermined focus; this could be writing behaviours to be targeted, or the students that will be observed. The teacher also decides when and how often formal observations will occur, and how they will be recorded.

#### *What Information Can Be Collected?*

The following table provides an example of information that could be collected through Focused Observation.



## Questions for observations

Planning	Drafting	Refining	Publishing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the student clearly identified the purpose and audience for writing?</li> <li>• Has the most appropriate form of writing been identified? e.g. procedure, report.</li> <li>• How did the student plan before writing? e.g. brainstorming, drawing, jotting lists, webbing, mapping, discussing with a peer?</li> <li>• What kinds of things do students say to themselves, to the teacher, or to others before writing?</li> <li>• Does the student use reading as a stimulus for writing ideas?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How easily is the student able to transcribe ideas?</li> <li>• Does the student write with fluency in the first draft or when recording initial ideas?</li> <li>• Do students edit as they go?</li> <li>• Is fluency hampered by difficulties with spelling?</li> <li>• Does the student have a go at spelling unknown words?</li> <li>• Which strategies does the student use when spelling unknown words?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At which level does the student make refinements? e.g. whole text, paragraph, sentence, word level.</li> <li>• How does the student add information?</li> <li>• To what extent does the student edit?</li> <li>• Does the student make notes on feedback from peers?</li> <li>• Does the student edit for many conventions at one time or individually?</li> <li>• How does the spelling change between the drafts or drafts and the final product?</li> <li>• Is the student able to identify misspellings?</li> <li>• What strategies does the student use to correct spelling?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the student use feedback from peers in the final copy?</li> <li>• Have all corrections been identified?</li> <li>• Have careful corrections been made?</li> <li>• Has consideration been given to the way the piece is presented?</li> <li>• Have alternative ways to publish work been discussed with peers or teacher?</li> <li>• Does the student appear satisfied with final piece?</li> <li>• Has the piece been shared with others?</li> </ul>

## Writing Products

The assessment of both process and product is important when making decisions about supporting students' writing development. Teachers can assess student products that have been created across the whole process of creating a text, e.g. planning, drafting, refining and publishing. The *First Steps* Writing Map of Development can provide teachers with the necessary support when analysing work products created and the processes used before, during and after writing.

The following products will support teachers in gathering information about students' writing development.

- 1 Logs**
- 2 Personal Goal-Setting**
- 3 Writing Journals**
- 4 Two Stars and a Wish**
- 5 Student Self-Assessment Formats**
- 6 Writing Samples**
- 7 Have-a-Go Pads**
- 8 Spelling-Error Analysis**
- 9 Surveys and Questionnaires**
- 10 Tests**

### **1 Logs**

WRITING LOGS



A Writing Log, in its simplest form, is a place to record the texts that have been written. The purpose of the Writing Log, together with the age and experience of the student, will determine the way it is used and structured. The following sample provides a suggestion of the types of entries that can be made. Further formats can be found on the Writing CD-ROM.

First Steps: Second Edition		Writing Map of Development
Name:	James P.	
<b>My Writing Log</b>		
Date:	2nd August	
Completed:	10th August	
Purpose:	to tell others about softball	
Form:	Report on Olympic Sport	
Comment:	I enjoyed finding out about softball and publishing on the computer.	
Date:	16th August	
Completed:		
Purpose:	to take notes	
Form:	List	
Comment:	In our group we brainstormed ideas about a day in the life of a Politician	
Date:	30th Aug	
Completed:	September	
Purpose:	whether kids should do homework	
Form:	Ballot Paper	
Comment:	I like finding out about what people thought about homework	
Date:		
Completed:		
Purpose:		
Form:		
Comment:		

**Figure 3.1**

#### *What Information Can Be Collected?*

Writing Logs provide teachers with information about a student's use of texts, including insights into the student's interests, preferences, attitudes or understandings.

## What Are the Most Efficient and Valid Ways to Collect Writing Information?

## **SPELLING LOGS**



A Spelling Log is a place to record words that a student knows how to spell. This may include a record of high-frequency words, class theme words, or words from personal spelling lists. It could also include words that the student is working towards learning to spell. These could be written on stick-on notes and transferred into the log once learnt. Figure 3.2 provides suggestions of the types of entries that can be made. Further formats can be found on the Writing CD-ROM.

**Figure 3.2**

## *What Information Can Be Collected?*

Spelling Logs provide teachers with an accurate record of words the student can spell and words the student is working towards learning.

## **2 Personal Goal-Setting**



Setting writing and spelling goals and assessing the achievement of those goals is a form of self-assessment suitable for all students. It can provide the teacher with valuable information about writing strategies and can assist students in developing independence in writing.

Goals can be recorded in many ways. They may be written in students' writing journals or recorded on goal-setting sheets. Once a goal is recorded, the teacher and the student can work together to monitor it. The cumulative record of the goals can provide evidence of successful learning, showing both teacher and student the specific writing strategies and understandings that have been learnt. It also clearly demonstrates the progress that is being made towards

## Collecting Data to Assess Writing Development

improving writing. For students who are just beginning to use goal-setting, frameworks can provide support. A variety of frameworks are provided on the Writing CD-ROM.

First Steps, Second Edition Name: Sophie		Writing Map of Development Date: 10 <sup>th</sup> Dec	
<b>Writing Goals for the Writing Process</b>			
I want to get better at...			
Planning	Drafting	Refining	Publishing
Making notes before I start writing. 6 <sup>th</sup> May		Adding more detail when writing descriptions 20 <sup>th</sup> May	Using clipart in my final copies. 4 <sup>th</sup> June
		Using more exciting words in narratives. 11 <sup>th</sup> June	

Figure 3.3

### What Information Can Be Collected?

Reviewing students' writing goals will provide information about the processes and strategies they are using to compose texts.

### 3 Writing Journals



Writing journals provide a framework for students to:

- record topics for writing;
- record thoughts, ideas or inspirations for writing;
- record social issues that concern them;
- reflect on writing development;
- reflect on spelling development;
- record thought processes when constructing texts;
- reflect on past learning and consider it for future application to new learning;
- record relevant background knowledge and experiences;
- share thoughts with others.

All journal writing requires clear guidelines; all types of entries need to be modelled extensively before students use them independently. Until students are familiar with this writing, teachers can brainstorm and chart possible sentence starters or questions as prompts for

## What Are the Most Efficient and Valid Ways to Collect Writing Information?

responses. The emphasis of writing journals should be on content and meaning, not on mechanics. While it is beneficial to provide regular opportunities to make entries during class time, this should not become tedious. Entries can be made every second or third day.

First Steps: Second Edition  
Name: James  
Date: 12<sup>th</sup> April  
Writing Map of Development

**Thinking About Your Writing**

1. I found this piece of writing  Easy  Difficult (circle one)

2. The best part of this piece of writing is the way I wrote lots of facts and labelled the diagram.  
I did this by writing lots of notes about the praying mantis.

3. Something I want to work on for the future is  
Proofreading.  
I plan to do this by Underlining the words and using my Have-a-go Pad.

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Figure 3.4 A metacognitive journal sample

### What Information Can Be Collected?

Journal entries may provide information about any of the four aspects of writing.

## 4 Two Stars and a Wish

Two Stars and a Wish provides students with a simple framework for reflecting on positive aspects of their work (the stars) as well as focusing on an area for improvement (the wish). It also provides a simple framework for peer assessment.

### What Information Can Be Collected?

Two Stars and a Wish may provide information about any of the four aspects of writing.

## 5 Student Self-Assessment Formats



Self-assessment is a critical part of developing a student's responsibility for his or her own learning. Self-assessment can provide teachers with insights into the student's writing that otherwise may not be apparent. With teacher support and guidance, students can develop the skills necessary for them to

## Collecting Data to Assess Writing Development

assess their own writing and spelling. A range of self-assessment formats are provided on the Writing CD-ROM.

Phase-specific student self-assessment formats are provided for the *First Steps* Writing Map of Development. These are designed to:

- support teachers as they involve students in the data-collection and reflection processes;
- support students to reflect on their own writing and to set writing goals;
- reflect the Indicators of each phase, but are written in student-friendly language;
- be completed by students.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Self-Assessment — Role Play Phase**  
Look What I Can Do

Things I Can Do	Not yet	Sometimes	Yes
• Tell people about what I have drawn or written.			
• Know the difference between drawing and writing.			
• Explain why I am writing or whom it is for.			
• Recognise and talk about characters in stories.			
• Recognise and talk about people in texts.			
• Point to where the print starts on the page.			
• Form letters when I am writing.			
• Write about things that I know.			

Things I Like to Do			
• Have stories read to me.			
• Have a go at writing on my own.			
• Draw and write about things I do and know about.			

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**Figure 3.5 A student's self-assessment format**

### What Information Can Be Collected?

Information for any of the four aspects of writing can be gathered using self-assessment formats.

## 6 Writing Samples

A collection of writing samples gathered over time provides a clear picture of how a student has improved as a writer. Samples can be collected at any stage of the writing process, either during specific writing lessons or from work in other learning areas. They can be those created at home, at school, independently or collaboratively, and they can be collected from a wide variety of media sources, e.g. paper and pen, electronic.

Analysing both draft and final copies of writing allows for a greater range of information to be collected. When students are writing

## **What Are the Most Efficient and Valid Ways to Collect Writing Information?**

drafts, encourage them not to use erasers so that any changes made during the construction of the text can be seen. If students are composing using word-processing software, have them print out the various drafts they produce as evidence of their writing.

Vegetables	Pasta	Utensils
1. garlic	1 cheese	1. fork
2. pasta		2. knife
3. oil		3. fryingpan
4. herbs		
3. onion		5. Spoon
6. Salt		6. bowl
		7. Colander
How you make it		
1st	We cut the onion.	
2nd	We put some water to boiled	
3rd	then we cut garlic. after thi	
4th	we mix the onion and the garli	
	and we cook them up	
6th	after that we pour the past	
7th	on the boiling water and we m	
8th	the tomato with onion and the garl	
9th	together and we eat them all up	

*My Country*  
*In my country we have some cornflakes. We have baboons. I have a mango tree sometime I climb up on the tree and took some mango. In my country my dad bought my pencils and some book to take to school. My country is very hot and some times its raining. People can go to church. We have a dogs and cat. In my country the people are rude. My country is Sudan. Some people like to go to my country. I have many friends. There is people who sell news paper.*

*By Beatrice*



### **Figure 3.6 Writing samples — across-curriculum**

---

**Figure 3.7**

## *What Information Can Be Collected?*

Information for any of the four aspects can be gathered from students' writing samples. A range of samples across a period of time can clearly demonstrate progress made.



## **7 Have-A-Go Pads**

The purpose of Have-A-Go pads is for students to try out alternative spellings of words they think they may have spelt incorrectly in their writing. Analysis of a student's spelling attempts can show understandings or misunderstandings of spelling patterns, as well as which strategies the student is using.

### What Information Can Be Collected?

Have-A-Go pads are particularly useful for collecting information about both the Conventions and the Processes and Strategies aspects.

## 8 Spelling-Error Analysis



Spelling-Error Analysis is a great way for teachers to determine the reason behind a student's spelling difficulty. It requires the teacher to look beyond whether a word is right or wrong and to carefully analyse the errors a student is making, searching for patterns in those errors.

Spellers who write most words accurately are still learning new principles about spelling. Their errors reveal current understandings, and help teachers make good decisions about teaching. Student writing samples, Have-A-Go pads or writing of dictated sentences are good sources of texts for this type of analysis.

Spelling Error Analysis								
Student's Name:		Writing Map of Development						
Mis-spelling	Standard Spelling	Reasonable Phonic Alternative	Errors with sequential letter patterns	Errors with hearing sounds in words	Reversal and repetition errors	Errors associated with meaning	Unclassified errors	Comments
Novemember	November				✓ repetition			Check: Does it look right? Syllables
whent	went	✓						Focus on critical features. Add to 'Words to Learn' list
exdends	extends			✓				Check pronunciation
kilometers	kilometres	✓				✓		Focus on base words + meanings kilo metre
sruface	surface		✓					Encourage proofreading Revise 'ur' pattern
chemicals	chemicals						✓	Check: Does the word look right? Syllables / Chunking Visual patterns.

Figure 3.8

### What Information Can Be Collected?

Spelling-Error Analysis can provide valuable information about both the Conventions and the Processes and Strategies aspects of writing.

## 9 Surveys and Questionnaires



Surveys and questionnaires about writing can take many forms and address a range of topics. They typically consist of a series of statements or questions concerning which students or parents are asked to express agreement or disagreement (sometimes using a scale). The items to be included on the survey or questionnaire will be determined by the type of information required. The Writing CD-ROM contains some sample surveys and questionnaires that can be used with either students or parents.

*First Steps: Second Edition* Writing Map of Development  
Name: Sophie F Date: 4<sup>th</sup> Feb

### Writing Survey

1. How do you feel when you are asked to write at school? Circle the face that shows how you feel.

2. How often do you write at home?

Often	Sometimes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Not at all
-------	-----------	---

3. How often do you use the computer to write for a purpose e.g. email a friend, write a story?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Often	Sometimes	Not at all
--	-----------	------------

4. What topics do you most enjoy writing about?  
Animal Projects

5. What types of writing do you most like doing?  
Poetry

6. Rank yourself as a writer. I am...

Terrific	Very good	<input checked="" type="radio"/> OK	Not very good
----------	-----------	-------------------------------------	---------------

7. Rank yourself as a speller. I am...

Terrific	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Very good	OK	Not very good
----------	--	----	---------------

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*First Steps: Second Edition* Writing Map of Development

### Parent Survey

Joshua is a writer!

Watch what your child does when they choose to write at home. Please highlight any behaviours you see.

**My Child:**

	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
writes without help from an adult	✓		
plans before starting to write		✓	
includes simple punctuation, e.g. capital letters	✓		
sometimes makes simple corrections to his/her work	✓		
re-reads writing to see if it makes sense		✓	
is keen to finish the writing task	✓		
attempts to spell unknown words		✓	

**Other Observations or Comments:**

Josh likes writing about projects that require research, projects on interesting things (people, animals etc). He takes pride in writing neatly and using it correctly. However he seldom writes if he is not encouraged without prompting and seldom initiates writing away from the classroom or homework.

Thank you for your input. We value any information you can share.

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Figure 3.9

Figure 3.10

## What Information Can Be Collected?

Surveys and questionnaires can be used to ascertain students' writing attitudes and interests or to gather information about their home writing practices. They can also provide an insight into the attitudes and beliefs parents hold, and the goals they may have for their child.

## 10 Tests

Testing can be another way of gathering data about a student's writing and spelling development, and should be used in

conjunction with other data-collection tools. Many types of tests are available, but generally they can be categorised under the following headings.

### **CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS**

Criterion-referenced tests are designed to measure how well students have learnt a specific body of knowledge or certain skills. Therefore, they can provide information related to strengths and weaknesses.

### **NORM-REFERENCED TESTS**

Norm-referenced tests are often referred to as Standardised Tests. They are formalised tests in which scoring, norms and administration have been established as a result of each having been given to a large number of students. They are administered under specific conditions adhering to the directions set out in the examiner's manual. The performances of other students are presented as norms for the purpose of comparing achievement.

### **TEACHER-MADE TESTS**

Many teachers devise their own tests to measure student progress in writing. These are generally criterion-referenced, and measure the students' mastery of what has been taught. The advantage they have over other types is that they can be tailored to a specific group of students or to specific information the teacher is seeking.

#### *What Information Can Be Collected?*

Tests give information about a student at a particular time, situation and place. The information may or may not be able to be generalised to other situations, times or places.

Tests may provide information about each of the four aspects. By analysing errors and misunderstandings, teachers are provided with direction for creating an effective writing program.

### **Conversations**

Both incidental and scheduled conversations will provide valuable information that may not be collected in other contexts. Teachers who ensure they are having conversations with individual students on a regular basis can gain a deeper understanding of each student's writing development.

Information about the following types of conversations is detailed.

- 1** Conferences
- 2** Interviews

## **1 Conferences**



There are a variety of ways to involve students in writing conferences. These include:

- one-on-one conferences — teacher and student;
- peer conferences — student and student;
- small-group conferences — several students and teacher;
- three-way conferences — student, teacher and parent.

Each of these situations can provide the teacher with an opportunity to collect data; however, the one-on-one conference can also provide the opportunity for individual instruction.

Effective one-on-one conferencing centres on building relationships with individual students. For conferences to be successful, students need to know what is expected of them; for example, what their role will be, the structure of the conference, and the records that will be kept. Although each student–teacher conference will be unique, it can be helpful to have a planning framework, such as that shown.

### **THE ROLE OF THE STUDENT IN CONFERENCES**

- Be prepared.
- Have current writing material and topics for discussion.
- Discuss any writing problems the teacher can help with.
- Review the writing goal. Discuss problems or successes in the achievement of the goal.
- Be prepared to set a new writing goal.

### **THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN CONFERENCES**

- Identify the focus for the discussion.
- Encourage the student to talk.
- Talk about strategies and processes that will help students improve their writing.
- Provide feedback to students.
- Review students' writing goals and assist them to set new ones.
- Record information gleaned from the conference.
- Plan future lessons, considering the needs of the whole class and small groups.

## Teacher–student conference framework

### Asking questions

What are you writing? Where are you up to? How can I help you? How do you feel about your text so far?

### Identifying the focus for the conference

What are your writing goals? Are you achieving them?

Is there anything you are having particular difficulties with that you would like me to help you with?

### Offering praise — emphasising strengths

### Making suggestions to improve the writing

### Setting directions for the future

Set a new writing goal if appropriate and discuss the possibility of a lesson targeting a particular aspect, if appropriate.

### Closure

It is useful for teachers to use recording sheets before, during or after conferencing with students; these recording formats can provide a focus for conversations and for keeping records of information shared. The Writing CD-ROM offers several recording sheets that can be used when conferencing.

#### *What Information Can Be Collected?*

Writing conferences can be used to gain information about any of the four aspects, depending on the focus of the conference.

### 2 Interviews



An interview is a one-on-one, prepared question-and-answer conversation between a teacher and a student or between a teacher and a parent.

Teacher–student interviews provide an opportunity for teachers to actively listen to students and encourage them to verbalise their thought processes. Teachers can design questions to focus on different aspects of writing, depending on the purpose and the desired outcomes of the interview. However, planning questions that elicit useful information and encourage students to do most of the talking is a challenge; effective questions should be focused, open and probing in order to encourage answers of more than one word.

Further examples of writing interview questions and recording formats can be found on the Writing CD-ROM.

## What Are the Most Efficient and Valid Ways to Collect Writing Information?

Spelling Interview Record Sheet	
Questions	Student Responses/Teacher Comment
Is spelling important? Why?	It is important, because if you mess it up people can't read it
When is it important to spell correctly?	In an official document, when you do something in your portfolio, your exams
Who is a good speller?	Me, Tom
Why?	We don't have to sound out the words, we can figure out how to spell words we don't know.
How do you feel about spelling?	I like it because I'm good at it
How do people learn to spell?	With the right kind of teaching reading a lot.
What do you do when you don't know how to spell a word?	Say it aloud + hear it in my head + the spelling pops into my head.
What else could you do?	If I know what the thing is then I can get a picture of the thing, the word in my head
Where in the classroom would you look if you wanted to know how to spell a word?	In a dictionary, classroom signs or charts.
If you were at home what would you do?	Ask Mum or Dad, look it up in the dictionary.
What do you do when you haven't spelled something correctly?	Rub it out, cross it out + do it again, but that doesn't happen at school because I can spell the words.
Tell me something you would like to learn about spelling.	How to spell in other languages like Latin. Knowing root words + the whole word it came from.
General Comment/Follow Up Spells correctly; needs vocab extension. Introduce to word stems book for word derivations	

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Writing Interview Record Sheet	
Questions	Student Response/Teacher Comment
Attitude	<i>How do you feel when asked to write?</i>
Use of Texts	<i>What text forms have you written over the past few weeks?</i>
Contextual Understanding	<i>What audiences have you written for? How did your writing change for each audience?</i>
Conventions	<i>Tell me about how you organised one of your pieces of writing?</i>
Processes and Strategies	<i>What do you do to refine your writing?</i>
General Comments/Follow-Up	

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Figure 3.11

Figure 3.12

Interviews with parents or carers can also provide useful information about students' writing outside the school environment. In all interviews, it is important to consider the following points.

- Explain the reasons for the interview and limit questions to those that will yield the most useful information. This way, parents won't feel 'interrogated'.
- Let the parents know that notes will be taken.
- Sample questions for parent–teacher interviews could include the following.
  - What are your child's special interests?
  - How often does your child choose to write at home?
  - What type of writing does your child like to do at home?
  - How do you currently help your child with writing?
  - What would you like your child to do as a writer?
  - What do you think your child needs to do to become a better writer?

### What Information Can Be Collected?

Interviews can provide information about any of the four aspects, depending on the questions being asked.

## How Can Information About Writing Be Recorded?

Teachers use a range of ways to record the information they gather about students' writing development. The use of computers or palm pilots often helps streamline the time it takes to record information.

The following ways of recording the information, on paper or electronically, are detailed.

- 1** Anecdotal Notes
- 2** Checklists
- 3** Rubrics
- 4** Annotations
- 5** *First Steps* Writing Map of Development

### 1 Anecdotal Notes



Anecdotal notes are short, objective, factual descriptions of observations recorded at the time an event or activity occurs, or soon thereafter. Behaviours listed on the *First Steps* Writing Map of Development will provide a focus for observations.

- Making useful anecdotal notes takes time and practice. They should record an accurate description of the situation and information about students' strengths and weaknesses, and should include comments and questions that may guide further observations.
- Notes should be written daily, and as soon as possible after an observation has been made. They can be written during a variety of writing procedures, e.g. Guided Writing, Independent Writing.
- The recording format should suit the teaching situation, the students, and the teacher's personal style, e.g. grids, stick-on notes, First Steps Writing Map of Development (see Fig. 3.13).
- Notes should be examined and analysed regularly to be sure that comments are being made for every student on a variety of writing behaviours, in different contexts and across the curriculum.

### 2 Checklists

A checklist is a list of skills or behaviours to be checked off as they are observed. Whether teacher-made or commercially produced, it is critical to acknowledge that checklists are static. Most checklists may not be applicable to every student in one classroom at the same time.

## How Can Information About Writing Be Recorded?

Cross Curriculum Grid						
Names	Subject Areas					
	Mathematics	Science	Society and Environment	Technology and Enterprise	Health and Physical Education	The Arts
Julie	Great explanation of Math problem Solving.		Struggled with the organisation of a report.	Needed support of peers to record findings in a paragraph.		Wrote a good paragraph about Picasso's life.
Dean	Needed my help to write a sentence about how he solved the math problem.	Didn't write anything.		Copied from Michelle to write about his findings.	Slow to get started but wrote several lines about smoking.	

Ms Thompson

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Figure 3.13

### Checklist for writing to recount

Name: _____ Date: _____	Always	S/times	Not Yet	Teacher Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses writing to recount to suit purpose and target audience, choosing the most appropriate form and format.</li> <li>• Provides an orientation that both sets the scene and aims to interest the reader.</li> <li>• Includes significant events chosen to add interest and impact.</li> <li>• Elaborates on events so the reader can visualise the experience.</li> <li>• Chooses to include dialogue or reported speech for impact.</li> <li>• Manipulates time order of events for impact.</li> <li>• Concludes with a personal reflection, evaluative comment and/or summarises aspects of the text, appropriate to the form.</li> <li>• Maintains consistent tense or manipulates tense for effect.</li> <li>• Writes in the active and passive voice e.g. I decided, It was decided.</li> <li>• Writes cohesively, using a large variety of linking words to do with time.</li> <li>• Manipulates writing in first and third person for impact.</li> </ul>				

### 3 Rubrics

Rubrics are recording frameworks that feature short descriptive statements along a continuum of excellence. Teachers and/or students determine the quality of a performance against a set of predetermined criteria. For example, a rubric about writing to instruct may assess performance against criteria such as statement of goal, list of materials and quantities required, and set of instructions. Rubrics can be reused, adding levels of achievement as students' skill level increases, or adding additional criteria for new concepts, skills or attitudes that students display.

There are many publications and websites that offer ready-made rubrics; however, many teachers wish to create their own. Involving students in the creation of rubrics is recommended, as ultimately it is their work that is being judged.

#### *Creating a Rubric*

- Deciding on the criteria.

Students can be involved in brainstorming these criteria. If they have not had experience in generating criteria for evaluation, show them some completed work samples. Characteristics of effective and not so effective samples can be listed and discussed for inclusion as criteria on the completed rubric.

- Articulating the qualities.

It is often easier to decide on the two extremes first; that is, what makes 'best' performance and what makes 'worst' performance.

- Deciding on the number of gradations.

It is a good idea to have an even number of gradations, as this eliminates the tendency to rank in the middle.

- Deciding on the labelling.

Labels to be used for the gradations need to be considered. Either a numerical value or a descriptive word can be used. Some teachers prefer to use 'neutral' words for gradation labels, while others prefer words that signal excellence, e.g. Lead, Bronze, Silver and Gold rather than Unsatisfactory, Satisfactory, Competent and Excellent.

Students may be involved in self- or peer-assessment, using the completed rubric before work is formally submitted for teacher evaluation. Rubrics can be 'holistic' or 'analytic' in nature. Holistic rubrics evaluate the task as a whole, while analytic rubrics evaluate each separate criterion.

## Analytic rubric for writing

QUALITY →				
CRITERIA	4	3	2	1
<b>Organisation</b>	Logical organisation.	Logical organisation, but strays a bit.	Text jumps around a little.	No real organisation.
<b>Editing</b>	All punctuation correct.	Punctuation correct except in unusual circumstances.	Limited correct use of punctuation.	No punctuation used at all.
<b>Sentences</b>	Each sentence contains one main idea with detailed description.	Each sentence contains one idea with some description.	Sentences are lengthy and contain more than one idea.	Sentences very long and difficult to identify.
<b>Spelling</b>	Almost all correct.	Good overall spelling.	High-frequency words spelt correctly.	Very few words spelt correctly.

## 4 Annotations

Annotations are short descriptions of judgements made about a student's work. The teacher records these descriptions directly onto the work sample. Annotations may be completed at the time of the event, but can also be completed at a later time if the work sample, such as written work, is portable. Annotations need to be objective, factual comments, and should lead to the recognition and interpretation of individual patterns of learning over time, e.g. this paragraph expands the main idea clearly.

## 5 First Steps Writing Map of Development



The *First Steps* Writing Map of Development is an excellent framework for recording information about students' writing development. Some teachers choose to record their observations, outcomes of conversations or analysis of products directly onto the Writing Map of Development. They may do this by writing on stick-on notes, or by dating, or by highlighting the indicators the student is displaying. Other teachers prefer to use another recording method first — such as checklists, conference records or rubrics — and then collate the information and transfer it to the Writing Map of Development.

## Collecting Data to Assess Writing Development

---

The following recording formats can be found on the Writing CD-ROM and may be photocopied for classroom use.

- 1** Class Profile Sheet
- 2** Individual Student Profile Sheet — Key Indicators only
- 3** Individual Student Profile Sheet — all indicators
- 4** Class Profile Sheets — Key Indicators only
- 5** Class Profile Sheets — all indicators
- 6** Writing Map of Development — Parent Version

## CHAPTER 4

# Role Play Writing Phase



Figure 4.1

## Global Statement

*In this phase, writers emulate adult writing by experimenting with marks to represent written language. Role Play writers are beginning to understand that writing is used to convey meaning or messages; however, as understandings about sound-symbol relationships are yet to develop, their messages are not readable by others. Role Play writers rely heavily on topic knowledge to generate text.*

# Role Play Writing Indicators

## Use of Texts

- ◆ Assigns a message to own written and drawn symbols.
- ◆ Demonstrates awareness that writing and drawing are different.
- ◆ Knows that print carries a message, but may 'read' writing differently each time.
- Writes, then asks others to assign meaning to what has been written.
- Dictates to an adult what they want written, e.g. This is my toy.
- Talks about own writing and drawing.
- Attempts to write own name.
- Makes random marks on paper or screen.
- Makes horizontal or linear scribbles with some breaks.
- Produces circular scribble.
- Orally recounts own experiences.
- Begins to use the metalanguage associated with writing, e.g. word, letter, sound.

## Contextual Understanding

- ◆ States purpose or audience for own writing, e.g. This is a card for dad.
- ◆ Identifies and talks about characters from literary texts.
- ◆ Identifies and talks about people and ideas in informational texts.
- Role plays writing for a purpose, e.g. taking a lunch order in a restaurant.
- Makes links to own experience when creating texts.
- Talks about times when they have seen others writing.
- Reacts to written texts in their environment, e.g. signs.
- Imitates the act of writing when they see others write.

## Conventions

- ◆ Begins to demonstrate an awareness of directionality, e.g. points to where print begins.
- ◆ Uses known letters or approximations of letters to represent writing.
- Draws symbols consisting of straight, curved or intersecting lines that simulate letters.
- Knows that a word can be written down.
- Writes letters randomly or as strings on the page.
- Mixes letters, numerals and invented letter shapes.
- Makes organisational decisions about writing, e.g. I'll start here so it will fit.
- Writes the first one or two letters of own name or a word correctly and may finish with a random string of letters.
- Recognises own name or part of it, in print.

## Processes and Strategies

- ◆ Relies upon personal experiences as a stimulus for 'writing'.
- Uses texts viewed, read or heard as a stimulus for writing.
- Copies print from the environment.
- Uses letters from own name to generate writing.
- Asks questions about printed words, signs and messages.
- Tells others about what has been 'written' or drawn.
- Voices thoughts before and during writing.

*Note The terms 'write' and 'writing' encompass the use of traditional tools, such as pen and paper, as well as the use of electronic tools such as computers or mobile phones.*

*The term 'texts' refers to both literary and informational texts and includes visual, spoken or written texts. These may be printed, electronic, live or multimodal.*



# Major Teaching Emphases

## Environment and Attitude (see p. 44)

- Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.
- Foster students' enjoyment of writing.
- Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. using known letters, composing messages.
- Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.

## Use of Texts (see p. 49)

- Expose students to a range of text forms, pointing out purpose, e.g. recipes tell how to make something.
- Provide opportunities for students to 'write' a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Model the connection between oral and written language, e.g. what is said can be written down.
- Demonstrate that written messages remain constant.
- Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.
- Teach students the metalanguage associated with writing, and encourage its use.

## Contextual Understanding (see p. 60)

- Discuss that writing has a purpose and an intended audience.
- Draw students' attention to decisions writers make when composing texts.
- Draw students' attention to the way characters are represented in literary texts.
- Draw students' attention to the way people and ideas are represented in informational texts.

## Conventions (see p. 67)

- Provide opportunities for students to develop and use new vocabulary.
- Begin to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. personally significant words.
- Build phonological awareness and graphophonic knowledge, such as:
  - recognising, matching and generating rhymes
  - listening for sounds in words
  - linking letter names with their sounds, focusing on the regular sound.
- Teach students the conventions of print.
- Model one-to-one correspondence between written and spoken words.
- Model the composition of simple sentences, including the use of punctuation, e.g. capital letters, full stops.

## Processes and Strategies (see p. 84)

- Build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. topic knowledge, sound–symbol relationships.
- Teach strategies used throughout the writing process, e.g. connecting.
- Teach spelling strategies, e.g. sounding out.
- Model simple publishing alternatives, e.g. text and illustration.
- Model how to find required information in texts.
- Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.

# Teaching and Learning Experiences

## ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE

### **Major Teaching Emphases**

- Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.
- Foster students' enjoyment of writing.
- Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. using known letters, composing messages.
- Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.

## Teaching Notes

A classroom community that supports and nurtures Role Play writers includes many opportunities that encourage them to interact with, explore and experiment with written language. Role Play writers' early attempts at writing should be accepted and praised. It is important that these writers feel comfortable 'having a go' at writing. The focus for developing positive attitudes towards writing as well as a supportive environment for Role Play writers is organised under the following headings.

- Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment
- Fostering Enjoyment of Writing
- Encouraging Experimentation
- Writing as a Social Practice

### ***Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment***

A supportive environment is one in which both the physical aspects and the culture of the classroom are considered. A positive classroom climate is one in which students have opportunities to use and combine printed, spoken, visual and digital processes. These opportunities contribute to students' willingness and eagerness to write.

### ***Physical Environment***

The foundation for developing understandings about language springs from a student's oral language. A jointly constructed



'print-rich' environment contains a variety of texts using print for different purposes and provides opportunities for students to discover relationships between oral and written language.

- *Everyday print* in the classroom and the community can be constantly referred to. This will help students begin to build understandings about the purpose of written language and the way it works. Talking about everyday print, encouraging students to bring in examples, preparing charts of community signs or taking students for walks around the community to read environmental print will all be beneficial.
- *Labels* can be attached to students' belongings and work displays. It is important that teachers model the creation and discuss the purpose of these labels.
- *Calendars and classroom planners* can help develop concepts such as the days of the week, yesterday, today and tomorrow, and week, month and year. Recording forthcoming events on calendars or planners helps students develop understandings of how written language is used to record and organise.
- *Word Walls* can contain words such as the names of students in the class and words students are currently learning. These words can be used as a reference for students when writing independently.
- *Songs, poems and rhymes* can be written on charts and read together. Encourage the use of these charts as a further source for finding words to use when writing.
- *Word banks* may include a class list of names with photographs next to them, members of the school community, and alphabet and number charts. Encourage students to use these when they are writing. Word Banks displayed at eye level are easier for students to use.
- A *writing centre* promotes active inquiry into how letters and words work. Magnetic letters with boards, pocket charts with letter cards, software programs, and a variety of writing materials such as papers, pencils, computers, printers, envelopes, tape and stamps will help Role Play writers to 'have-a-go' at writing.
- A *reading corner* provides another opportunity to promote growth in understandings about written language. This corner can include a variety of texts, e.g. literary texts, informational texts, picture dictionaries, interactive storybooks, and book and tape sets.
- *Creative Corners* containing appropriate literacy materials encourage students to write for real purposes. For example, a restaurant corner could have menus, blank cards for recipes, notepads and pencils, and a post office corner could have envelopes, stamps, stickers and calendars. Establishing a particular corner that links directly to a planned excursion or field trip provides a context for

exploring writing for real purposes. Texts and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) resources associated with the theme of the corner can also be included.

### Options for Corners

grocery store	florist
museum	bank
theatre	police station
library	hospital
nurses' clinic	dentist
travel agency	artist's studio
shop	roadhouse/restaurant

It is important to encourage students to continually interact with and use the print created and displayed in the classroom environment.

- Provide opportunities for students to ‘write the room’. They can walk around the room and copy words they find. They can choose these words themselves, or some direction can be provided by the teacher, e.g. ‘Today, can you write down some words that begin with the letter r?’
- Provide opportunities to ‘read the room’.
- Write and share sentences about planned curriculum activities, e.g. ‘Today we will be collecting leaves. I wonder how many different shapes we will find?’ Use these sentences as an opportunity for students to interact with and discuss print.
- Write letters to individual students, mailing them in the class post-box. Invite students to take the letters home and ‘read’ them with an adult.
- Encourage students to ‘write’ letters and mail them in the class post-box or create emails through the class intranet.
- Model the use of environmental print as a reference source, e.g. copying words, looking for letters, using a calendar to find a date.
- Display and discuss writing created by other family members, e.g. grandmothers, elders, siblings.

### Classroom Culture

While it is beneficial to provide access to a variety of physical resources for students to use when writing, it is equally important to create a classroom culture in which students see learning to write as useful and worthwhile. It is important that students in this phase view themselves as writers.



- Allocate regular periods of time for writing.
- Provide genuine purposes and audiences for writing.
- Have high expectations of all students.
- Provide opportunities for students to choose their own topics.
- Provide a range of ICT resources for students to use to create texts.
- Praise all attempts at writing.
- Display students' writing.
- Ensure students have a clear sense of what is expected of them.
- Allow time for students to share their 'writing' with others.
- Value writing, and convey this attitude to students.
- Use language that fosters both unity and diversity.
- Incorporate purposeful writing into all learning areas.

## ***Fostering Enjoyment of Writing***

Take every opportunity to foster students' enjoyment of writing in the following ways.

- Model writing for students every day.
- Provide opportunities for students to write for their own purposes and audiences.
- Provide opportunities for students to use a range of ICT resources when combining print and images, e.g. computers, software programs, interactive whiteboards, digital cameras.
- Provide time and opportunities for students to 'read' their own writing to others.
- Provide multiple demonstrations of the strategies effective writers use.
- Involve the students with buddies from other classes to provide real audiences for their writing.
- Interact and respond positively to all writing attempts.
- Respond primarily to the message of students' writing.
- Invite guest writers, such as grandparents or visiting authors, to write for the students.
- Provide an enticing writing corner.
- Read to students every day from a variety of texts.
- Discuss the texts read.
- Provide opportunities for students to practise writing using computer software or websites, e.g. Clicker Writer.

## ***Encouraging Experimentation***

Role Play writers should be encouraged to experiment with all aspects of writing. This can be done by inviting students to:

- talk about personal experiences as a source of topics for writing;
- write for real purposes;
- use personal experiences to make connections to ideas in texts read aloud;

### **Role Play Writing Phase**

- use a variety of strategies when ‘writing’, e.g. creating images;
- use drawing as an initial means of communicating;
- have a go at writing by copying or using what they know, e.g. My name has a K;
- use ICT to communicate a message.

### ***Writing as a Social Practice***

The focus when teaching writing in the classroom is to provide many real-world situations that require the use of written language. The ultimate goal is for students to function in society as literate individuals who can use writing to communicate their ideas, share information, stimulate thinking, formulate questions and influence policy and action.

It is important to talk with Role Play writers about why people write and to share examples of real-life writing, particularly writing by people they identify with. This helps them to begin to understand that writing is an important social practice and that there is an expectation they will join a community of writers who use writing for different purposes.

For further information about Environment and Attitude, see *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning*, Chapter 5: Establishing a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment.



# USE OF TEXTS

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Expose students to a range of text forms, pointing out purpose, e.g. recipes tell how to make something.
- Provide opportunities for students to ‘write’ a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Model the connection between oral and written language, e.g. what is said can be written down.
- Demonstrate that written messages remain constant.
- Foster students’ sense of ‘personal voice’ and individual writing style.
- Teach students the metalanguage associated with writing, and encourage its use.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for supporting Role Play writers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.

- Exposure to a Range of Text Forms
- Opportunities to ‘Write’ a Range of Texts
- Crafting Personal Voice and Individual Style
- Developing Metalanguage

### ***Exposure to a Range of Text Forms***

Role Play writers will benefit from continued opportunities to discuss and interact with a variety of literary and informational texts. Texts selected may include songs, poems, rhymes, fairy or folk tales, traditional or modern stories, simple reports, procedures, messages, timetables or environmental signs. These texts could be multimodal, class-made or published materials presented in a range of formats such as books, websites, emails, CD-ROMs or software programs.

During Modelled, Shared and Interactive Writing sessions, show students how successful writers create a range of text forms for different purposes. These could include the creation of texts used to:

- entertain, e.g. songs, rhymes, jokes, speech bubbles;
- recount, e.g. diaries, retells;
- describe, e.g. classroom instructions, labels;

## **Role Play Writing Phase**

- socialise, e.g. thank-you letters, electronic cards, invitations, notes;
- explain, e.g. classroom rules, routines;
- instruct, e.g. recipes, lists of things to do, labels;
- persuade, e.g. brochures, catalogues;
- inquire, e.g. interviews.

## ***Opportunities to 'Write' a Range of Texts***

Students learn to write by watching adults write, talking about writing, having-a-go at writing themselves and receiving explicit, supportive feedback. Modelled, Shared and Interactive Writing, as well as Language Experience sessions, provide ideal opportunities to show Role Play writers how to create a range of texts.

Following these sessions, Role Play writers can be encouraged to experiment with writing for real purposes. Such experiences are valuable; they will help students to clarify and develop understandings about written language. Positive feedback is critical, and all early attempts to create texts should be accepted and praised.

Understandings about writing are closely linked to understandings about reading. Role Play writers will learn much about written language through reading experiences. In Modelled and Shared Reading sessions the focus can be on demonstrating many aspects of written language, such as the following.

- Texts are organised in particular ways, e.g. print, pictures and sounds.
- Texts have special features; for example, electronic texts may have screen prompts and pop-up or drop-down menus, while a book has page numbers, a cover and a spine.
- Texts have different purposes.
- Texts are constructed differently; for example, informational texts usually have headings and subheadings.
- There is a connection between written and oral language.
- Writing has a purpose and an intended audience.
- What has been written can be read and re-read, and the message remains constant.

When students are 'having-a-go' at writing, encourage them to apply what they have learnt about written language from reading.

## ***Crafting Personal Voice and Individual Style***

Many things — including a writer's purpose, world view, multiple identity and culture — influence voice within text. Voice in writing is defined in numerous ways.



'Writing words that will make readers listen and be affected.'

Tony Romano 2004

'Voice is the imprint of ourselves on our writing.'

Don Graves 1994

'Voice in writing has to do with a unique personality-on-paper.'

Ralph Fletcher 1993

At this phase, it is important to help students understand the concept of voice. This can be done during Modelled or Shared Reading sessions, or when Reading to Students.

- Show and discuss examples of sentences, passages or entire texts that demonstrate voice.
- Share samples of students' writing that have voice.

Modelled, Shared, Interactive and Guided Writing sessions can also help Role Play writers to understand and develop voice in their own writing. This can be done in a range of ways.

- Modelling how personal thoughts and feelings can add voice to writing.
- Modelling how words can be changed to add voice; for example, 'I like chocolate' becomes 'I LOVE chocolate'.
- Providing opportunities for students to write about topics that are personally important.

## ***Developing Metalanguage***

Students need support to build up a vocabulary they can use to discuss and describe language, their own writing and the writing process. The vocabulary used to talk about language is known as metalanguage, and when students are able to use it to talk competently about their own writing and learning, it helps them to understand how language operates. Developing metalanguage also helps students to understand the support and feedback provided by teachers.

To help Role Play writers become accustomed to terms associated with writing and written language, it is important to use metalanguage as part of everyday teaching. This can be done across learning areas, as part of targeted discussions, during explicit demonstrations, during one-on-one conversations with students or as part of planned Modelled, Shared, Interactive or Guided Writing sessions.

### Role Play Writing Phase

Certain terms tend to be more prominent when focusing on different aspects of writing. For example, when working with Role Play writers, consider the use of the following terms.

- Use of Texts: text, list, letter, email, writing, drawing, message, ideas.
- Contextual Understanding: purpose, audience, voice.
- Conventions: word, sentence, letter, full stop, capital letter, spell, punctuation.
- Processes and Strategies: connecting, creating images, draft, editing.

For further information about the Use of Texts aspect, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn:

- Chapter 1: Use of Texts
- Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.



## Involving Students

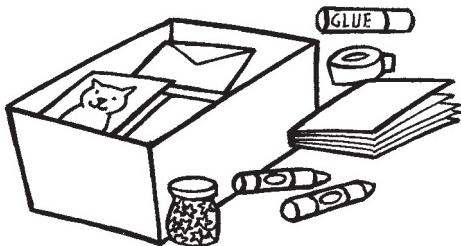
### 1 Writing Bag



Writing Bag is an activity that provides a school-home link, encourages students to write for real purposes and audiences, and can be an excellent way to foster a sense of personal voice. This activity provides an opportunity for students to write about topics that are personally significant. Writing Bag also provides opportunities to write for purposes that may not be catered for in the school setting; for example, an invitation to a family gathering or a thank-you note for a gift.

A Writing Bag is a bag, backpack or small box containing some or all of the following.

- A range of plain, lined, coloured paper and card
  - Recycled greeting cards
  - Pictures from magazines, catalogues, discarded picture books
  - Small blank books already made up (several blank pages stapled together with a card cover)
  - Envelopes
  - Pencils and markers
  - Glitter, glue and tape
  - A pencil sharpener
  - An alphabet chart
  - A list of high-frequency and personally significant words
  - A written explanation for parents or carers
- Hold a class meeting with parents to explain the purpose and process for making use of the Writing Bag.
  - Brainstorm some suggestions with students as to different writing they can do at home.
  - Send the Writing Bag home with a different student every second day.
  - Provide time for each student to share completed writing with the class.
  - Create a space where students can display their writing. Talk about the writing, e.g. who, why, choices, who helped, what was easy, what was hard.



### 2 Travelling Journal



Using a Travelling Journal encourages students to write for authentic purposes and audiences. Each night one student hosts a visit by a special class toy to his or her home. While the toy is there

## Role Play Writing Phase

the student, with help from an adult, ‘writes’ in a journal about the adventures enjoyed with the toy. The writing is then shared with classmates the following day. It is often helpful to give parents or carers guidelines about the sort of things that can be written in the journal.

- Organise the Travelling Journal. This consists of a backpack or bag containing a notebook (journal), writing implements and a soft toy, e.g. a bear.
- As a class, decide on a name for the soft toy, e.g. Big Bear.
- Establish class rules for taking the Travelling Journal home.
- Hold a class meeting to get support and endorsement of the project from families.
- Include in the Travelling Journal a letter for parents/carers.
- Send the Travelling Journal home with a different student each day.
- Set aside time each day for students to share what they have written in the Travelling Journal.



## 3 Postcards

Writing postcards to family members and friends gives Role Play writers an authentic audience for their writing and an opportunity to share what they are learning in different curriculum areas at school. Postcards that tell family members about upcoming events help students to understand that writing communicates a message.

- Discuss with students that the purpose of writing postcards is to share things about school with friends and family.
- Brainstorm a list of audiences students can write to, e.g. neighbours, Grandpa, Aunties.
- Encourage students to talk about across-curriculum areas they could write about, such as what they are learning in physical education or a favourite science topic.
- Give each student a ‘postcard’.
- Have the student illustrate the activity to be written about on the front of the postcard. Alternatively, take a digital photo of the student participating in a particular activity.
- Have students ‘write’ on the back of their postcards.
- Ask them to take the postcards home to be addressed and mailed to their selected audience.



A range of Postcard Internet sites are available that provide opportunities for students to create and send electronic postcards.

## 4 Class News Book

The Class News Book involves modelling the writing of a student's oral news each day. This activity is an effective way to help students understand that oral language can be written down and that the written message remains constant.

- Make a Class News Book out of large pieces of paper.
- Model the writing of one or two sentences from a student's oral news each day.
- Use the writing then to highlight particular language features, concepts of print and conventions, e.g. capital letters, spaces between words, full stops, sentences.
- Invite the selected student to illustrate the news sentence.
- Create opportunities for the whole class to re-read news sentences from the Class News Book.

Georgia said, "I held a baby at <u>Scott's house."</u> 	Ellena Said, "I <u>looked</u> at some puppies." 	Amber said, "My doll is made of <u>plastic</u> . She wets her pants." 	Sophie "I am <u>Zoe</u>
Cathy said, " I made a paper <u>bird</u> for B.B." 	Ryan said, "I have written a <u>letter</u> for Daniel." 	Vanessa said, "My <u>tooth</u> will come out <u>soon</u> ." 	Liam "See my pos. from <u>Holland</u> ." 
Brett said, "I have a <u>whistle</u> . It can unfold." 	Alex Said, "I have a <u>plastic</u> motor-bike." 	Naomi said, "We made <u>YUK</u> soup out of <u>seaweed</u> ." 	James said, "I have a <u>gold</u> medal." 
Phillip said, "This sand is coloured. <u>See</u> the <u>stripes</u> ?" 	Tim. M said, "This is my <u>small</u> , <u>blue</u> engine. It has coal." 	Charles said, "I am <u>growing</u> some pumpkins." 	Ms B said, "Everyone <u>better</u> be <u>good</u> today." 



Figure 4.2

Each week, this activity could form part of a home reading sheet, or Class Newspaper, a single sheet of weekly news recorded on the computer that students take home to share with their families. This page could include illustrations to assist students to ‘read’ the news sentences.

## **5 Making the Most of the Moment**

Making the Most of the Moment is seizing the opportunity to use unscheduled happenings to reinforce understandings about writing and spelling, and about the connection between oral and written language. It involves the class talking about an unscheduled happening and collaboratively creating a text around the event. It is important that the class timetable is flexible enough to capitalise on teachable moments.

- Notice things happening around the school that can be used as prompts for writing, e.g. a truck delivering sand, a bird stuck in a tree.
- Encourage the students to watch and talk about the ‘moment’.
- Use the event as a basis for Modelled or Shared Writing.  
Alternatively, invite students to ‘write’ about it.
- Invite a student to illustrate the event. Display the writing.  
Provide opportunities for students to re-read the text over the following days.

*Today when we were at dance  
a bird flew into the gym and  
got stuck inside. We could see  
that the bird had a nest high  
up in the rafters. When Mr.  
Rourke tried to get the bird  
it swooped down and knocked  
off his sunglasses.*

Figure 4.3 Modelled writing about an unscheduled event

## **6 Text Innovation**

Text Innovation is the name given to the process of adopting and adapting any linguistic patterns or devices employed by another author. Many texts lend themselves to innovation. When writers innovate on a text, they strengthen their understanding of the concept of a word and the concept of a sentence. Text innovations



allow particular linguistic features to be highlighted and alternatives to be discussed.

Innovations may include:

- *word-level innovations* — where new words are substituted for the original words, e.g. 'I wrote to the zoo to send me a . . . It was too . . . , so I sent it back.'
  - *sentence-level innovations* — where the sentence structure is maintained but the words in the sentence are altered, e.g. 'Rosie the hen went for a walk under . . .' becomes 'Sammy the duck went for a swim under . . .'.
- Select a simple story, rhyme, song or poem that can be easily modified.
  - Read the text several times until the students are familiar with the particular rhyme, rhythm or repetitive pattern.
  - When using a big book or enlarged text, place stick-on notes on the original text to conceal words to be replaced.
  - Invite students to suggest alternative words to fill the spaces.
  - Jointly select a word and write it on the stick-on note.
  - Read the newly created text together.

#### *Extensions*

- Provide each student with a copy of the class innovation.
- Provide time for students to illustrate their innovations.
- Publish the innovations and use them for further reading.
- Provide copies of the newly created text for students to take home to 'read'.

## 7 Sequencing Activities

Sequencing activities helps students become familiar with a range of text forms and provides a meaningful context for Role Play writers to create texts, using picture sequences as a stimulus. Giving students many opportunities to sequence pictures, discuss their selections and create an oral text is an effective prewriting activity.

- Provide students with a series of pictures.
- Have them sequence the pictures logically to create a message.
- Encourage them to create an oral retell to match the picture sequence. They may choose to 'write' some key words or phrases to support each picture.
- Explain that often more than one sequence is possible.
- Organise students to use the pictures to retell the text to others.

## **Role Play Writing Phase**

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As a variation, pictures from textless picture books can be used. Each student creates text to tell to another. Pictures illustrating poems, rhymes, songs or across-curriculum informational texts can also be used for this activity.

## **8 Wall Stories**

Wall Stories are large representations (text and illustrations) of the main events of an experience or a text read or heard; they are an effective way of helping young writers focus on sequencing a text and making links between pictures, oral text and written words. Creating Wall Stories can also expose students to a range of text forms. Wall Stories can be created using shared experiences, songs, poems, rhymes and literary or informational texts with simple storylines.

- Involve the students in a shared experience or read a text with the class.
- Pair students to orally retell the experience or the text.
- Work with them to elicit and record the main events on chart paper or large cards.
- Organise them to work in small groups to illustrate the main events.
- Jointly sequence the cards, and read the newly created text with the students.
- Display the Wall Story and refer to it frequently during classroom print walks.
- After a period of time, make the Wall Story into a big book and leave it in the class library for students to read during Independent Reading.

As a variation, a Wall Story can be created as a continuous account of an ongoing class project, such as a science experiment about growing plants. Pages are added to the Wall Story as the project progresses.

## **9 Captioning Writing**

Captioning Writing involves an adult scribing a sentence or sentences for a student. This one-on-one situation helps Role Play writers make connections between oral and written language and is also a way of demonstrating that written messages remain constant.

- Encourage students to draw or paint a picture of a recent event or a favourite topic.
- Ask each student to give a sentence or caption that goes with the picture.



- Scribe (or type) what the student has said, saying each word aloud as it is written. Where possible, have the student help with the spelling of the words.
- Re-read the sentence together, pointing to each word.
- Encourage the student to re-read the sentence.

#### *Extensions*

- Leave space for the student to copy the sentence underneath.
- Leave spaces to add in the letters or words the student can write, e.g. his or her name.
- Write the words on stick-on notes and invite the student to re-create the sentence.

## **10 Story Prop Box**

Story Prop Box is an independent activity that encourages Role Play writers to become familiar with the language, structure and organisation of a range of text forms. After sharing texts with the whole class, create Story Prop Boxes to accompany chosen examples. A Prop Box consists of a copy of the text and any props that will encourage the students to dramatise, role play, perform or create retells of the familiar text; for example, after sharing ‘Cinderella’, provide props such as an apron, a feather duster, a pumpkin, a ‘glass slipper’, a tiara and a small cushion. If they are available, interactive CD versions of the text are also a useful addition to the Prop Box.

- Allocate students to work in small groups and to select a Prop Box.
- Provide time for them to recap and discuss the text.
- Direct them to allocate roles and select props from the box.
- Allow them time to create a role play, dramatisation or retell of their text.
- If appropriate, invite students to perform for the whole class.

## **11 Creative Corners**

Refer to Chapter 5: Experimental Writing Phase, page 103.

# CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Discuss that writing has a purpose and an intended audience.
- Draw students' attention to decisions writers make when composing texts.
- Draw students' attention to the way characters are represented in literary texts.
- Draw students' attention to the way people and ideas are represented in informational texts.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for helping Role Play writers to develop contextual understanding in writing is organised under the following headings.

- Understandings about Purpose and Audience
- Exploring Decisions Writers Make
- Representing Characters in Literary Texts
- Representing People and Ideas in Informational Texts

### ***Understandings About Purpose and Audience***

In this phase, it is important that students begin to develop an awareness that all texts are written from a certain perspective and for a particular purpose and audience. Modelled and Shared Writing sessions provide opportunities to discuss with students who they could write to and why they might write to them; for example, 'I want to send a Happy Birthday message to my Dad. I'll write myself a note to remember to bring a hat tomorrow'.

Students need to develop an awareness that texts are written for different purposes. Involving students in discussions about why texts are written helps them understand that writing can be used for different reasons. To develop these understandings, it is important to model different forms of writing for different purposes; for example, 'I'm going to write a note on the door to remind everyone that it's Sports Day tomorrow . . . Help me write down the procedure to make pancakes so you can take the recipe home and make them'. Additionally, when reading different text forms to students, highlight the purpose; for instance, 'Why would the author have written this text? Who might find this text useful?'



This resource categorises texts according to eight purposes, and writers usually employ certain forms of text to meet these purposes.

- To entertain
- To recount
- To socialise
- To inquire
- To describe
- To persuade
- To explain
- To instruct

At Role Play phase students need to write for real, familiar audiences who can provide immediate feedback. Having this type of audience helps students develop the understanding that print carries a message and that writing can evoke a response.

Possible audiences for Role Play writers could include relatives, siblings, classroom toys, peers, teachers, public figures or family friends.

### ***Exploring Decisions Writers Make***

Role Play writers benefit from opportunities for ongoing conversations about the decisions authors and illustrators make when creating texts. Constantly encouraging students to question authors' choices helps them to develop the foundations of critical literacy. Modelled, Shared and Interactive Writing sessions provide opportunities to demonstrate the types of questions authors ask themselves and how they make choices about these questions.

#### *Purpose and audience*

Why am I writing this text?

Who am I writing for?

What do they already know?

#### *Content and form*

What do I want to tell them?

What ideas should I include?

What bits will I leave out?

What is the best way to get my message across, e.g. letter, list?

During these sessions, discussions and demonstrations should include the use of reflective commentary and metalanguage.

## **Representing Characters in Literary Texts**

Modelled, Shared or Guided Reading sessions will provide contexts for conversations about how characters are represented in a variety of literary texts. This includes recognising and discussing how characters have been represented; for instance, talking about gender, choice of details or physical appearance. Ongoing discussions will help build understandings that students can use when writing.

- How are the characters represented in the text, e.g. Is Monique a kind or a mean character?
- Do you know any people who are like the characters in the story? Who are they? How are they the same? How are they different?
- Why do you think the author chose . . . as the name for this character?
- What other names would have been suitable for the characters in this text?
- How has the artist chosen to illustrate this character?

## **Representing People and Ideas in Informational Texts**

Texts from across the curriculum, together with other authentic reading materials, will provide opportunities for students to discuss how people and ideas have been represented in particular ways. Magazines, advertising brochures, food packaging, posters, science and society, and environmental texts can provide stimulus for discussions.

- Who wrote the text?
- What do you already know about this topic?
- Does the information in the text match what you already know?
- Who is in the text?
- How is the person (or people) represented in the text?
- Do you know anyone who is like the person in the text? Who is it? How are they the same? How are they different?

For further information about the Contextual Understanding aspect, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 2: Contextual Understanding.



## Involving Students

### 1 Who Can I Write For?



Who Can I Write For? is an activity in which students brainstorm possible audiences for their writing. Considering the audience of each piece of writing they create helps students begin to develop an understanding that texts are modified according to a particular audience.

- Have students brainstorm a list of possible audiences they could write for.
- Write suggestions on a class chart.
- Provide a format and have students draw some possible personal audiences for their writing.
- Discuss how writing might meet the needs of particular audiences, e.g. what would we include when recounting a class event to parents?

First Steps Second Edition Name: <b>Jack B</b> Writing Map of Development Date: <b>Dec</b>	
Who Can I Write For?	
 I can write for <b>LACHLAN</b>	 I can write for <b>DAB</b>
 I can write for <b>MUM</b>	 I can write for <b>Miss Lannitelli</b>

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Figure 4.4 A student's response to this activity

### 2 Change the Audience

The Change the Audience activity helps Role Play writers to develop an understanding that writing has an intended audience. It assists students to realise that when the audience changes, information may be added, deleted or changed. This activity requires the collaborative construction of a text for a particular audience.

- Discuss the purpose and audience for a piece of writing, e.g. a message to the principal about the class picnic.

### Role Play Writing Phase

- Have students brainstorm the information to be included in the message. Discuss the needs of the chosen audience.
- Jointly construct the message.
- Discuss how the message would be different for a different specified audience.

### 3 It Would Look Like This

It Would Look Like This is an activity in which students are encouraged to draw and ‘write’ about a nominated character from a literary text or a person from an informational text. They then compare their drawings with those of their peers, discussing some of the decisions they made. This activity helps students begin to understand some of the decisions writers make when writing about people or characters in literary and informational texts.

- Nominate a character from a literary text or a person from an informational text, e.g. a bear, a fairy, a fisherman.
- Have students close their eyes and imagine what their character or person would look like. Lead a session to help students imagine the character or person; for example, ask any of the following questions.
  - What colour is your fairy?
  - Is it large or small?
    - What does your fairy wear? What type of clothes?
    - What is your fairy doing?
    - How is your fairy feeling?
  - Provide time for students to draw their pictures.
  - Invite students to share their pictures and compare them with other class members.
  - Discuss some of the decisions made about how the character or person has been represented. Highlight how authors make similar decisions when writing.
  - Select one student’s drawing and jointly construct a written description of the character or person, emphasising the decisions made.

Sarah B.



My Fairy Princess has  
to have tied up hair.  
She has beautiful wings.

Figure 4.5 A student’s  
imagination — picture of a  
character

As an extension to this activity, read a range of texts featuring the nominated character or person. Have students compare their drawings with the character or person in the text.



## 4 Like or Unlike?

Like or Unlike? is an activity that helps students to make connections and comparisons between what they know about the world in which they live and the way characters or people are represented in informational or literary texts. This activity helps Role Play writers to become aware of the decisions authors make when creating texts.

- Select a main character or person from an informational or literary text.
- Before reading the text, invite students to share what they know about the same type of person or thing in real life, e.g. What do we know about teachers, elderly people, ogres, mice?
- Record responses on a class chart.
- Ask students to draw their impressions or ideas of the character or person from the text.
- Have them share their pictures with the whole class, discussing what they have included.
- Read the text to students.
- Discuss and record how the character or person has been represented in the text.
- Provide time for students to discuss how their drawings are like or unlike the author's description or the illustrator's drawing.
- Discuss why authors and illustrators might have made their decisions.

## 5 Text Innovation

Text Innovation is the name given to the process of adapting a text created by another author. By completing Text Innovation activities with a contextual understanding focus, students are encouraged to alter decisions made by the author and to consider the impact of these changes on the storyline. Changes can be made to characters, character traits or the setting.

- Select a text for the innovation.
- Read the text to the students several times.
- Select a feature that could be innovated upon. Innovations could involve:
  - changing the gender of one of the characters;
  - substituting new characters for existing characters, e.g. How would the story change if Goldilocks had gone to a lion's house?
  - changing a character's trait/s, e.g. instead of a mean stepsister, have a kind stepsister;

### **Role Play Writing Phase**

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- changing the setting of the text, e.g. set 'Little Red Riding Hood' in the city.
- Jointly innovate on the original text to create a new one (oral or written). Discuss how any changes affected the rest of the text, e.g. when we changed the stepsister from being mean to being kind, we had to change the end of the story.
- Encourage students to make comparisons between the original text and the new version, sharing ideas about which one they preferred, and why.
- Invite students to illustrate the newly created text. It can be turned into a big book, a class book or a Wall Story.
- As a whole class, re-read the newly created text.

## **6 Same but Different**

Same but Different is an activity that involves students in comparing illustrations in two versions of the same story. Fairy tales are a good source of texts for this type of activity, and could include paper or electronic versions.

Completing this activity will draw students' attention to the way characters are represented in texts and the decisions the author and/or illustrator make about representing them.

- Select two text versions of one story.
- Select one version and discuss the parts of the story that are illustrated.
- Compare these illustrations with those in the second version.
- Discuss and compare the way the characters are represented in each text.
- Discuss possible reasons the author and/or illustrator made particular decisions.



# CONVENTIONS

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Provide opportunities for students to develop and use new vocabulary.
- Begin to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. personally significant words.
- Build phonological awareness and graphophonic knowledge, such as:
  - recognising, matching and generating rhymes
  - listening for sounds in words
  - linking letter names with their sounds, focusing on the regular sound.
- Teach students the conventions of print.
- Model one-to-one correspondence between written and spoken words.
- Model the composition of simple sentences, including the use of punctuation, e.g. capital letters, full stops.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for supporting Role Play writers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.

- Building Vocabulary
- Developing Phonological Awareness and Graphophonic Knowledge
- Understanding Conventions of Print
- Understanding Conventions of Grammar

### ***Building Vocabulary***

All students, when they arrive at school, already have an oral vocabulary based on the speech variety and experiences at home. Research has shown that vocabulary acquisition is crucial to academic development (Baker, Simmons & Kameenui 1998), so it is important for teachers to ensure Role Play writers have every opportunity to expand their vocabulary across a broad range of contexts and experiences.

## ***Developing Vocabulary***

Creating a rich language environment that includes reading aloud, reciting poems and rhymes, singing songs and playing with language is a starting point for developing understandings about written language. Role Play writers can be supported to develop their vocabulary in the following ways.

- Valuing and providing time for play and informal talk.
- Valuing existing speech variety if non-standard or in an additional language or dialect.
- Modelling the use of language in different contexts.
- Introducing subject-specific vocabulary across the curriculum, e.g. the language of mathematics.
- Providing experiences through activities outside the classroom, e.g. trips or excursions, and activities inside the classroom, e.g. manipulating materials, inviting guest speakers or capitalising on any impromptu events.
- Discussing written words at every opportunity, pointing out the author's choice and why it is the 'best fit' in the context.
- Involving students in meaningful word-play activities.
- Jointly constructing Word Walls featuring the words students are learning, e.g. their names.
- Providing opportunities for students to 'read' and 'write' for a range of purposes.
- Immersing students in a range of texts.
- Using a rich vocabulary in all contexts.
- Developing language across all learning areas, e.g. society and environment.
- Talking about talk.

## ***Building a Bank of Words that Are Automatically Spelt and Used***

At all phases of development students copy, recall and have-a-go at spelling words during independent writing. The bank of words that can be automatically spelt and used can be made up of high-frequency words, personally significant words, topic or theme words, or signal words. It is important to help Role Play writers begin to develop a small bank of personally significant words. These are words significant to each student, e.g. own name, family names or titles, pet's name or teacher's name.

Exploring and using these words in reading, writing and any across-curriculum activities will help to reinforce their recognition and use.



## **Developing Phonological Awareness and Graphophonic Knowledge**

Phonological awareness is an ability to hear, combine and manipulate the different sound units of spoken words. This may include the following.

- Word awareness: spoken language is made up of words; words are representations of objects (cat), emotions (love) and concepts (height); words can rhyme.
- Syllable awareness: some words have a single syllable and others have more than one.
- Onset and rime awareness: words with a single syllable are made up of onsets and rimes, e.g. sh-op.
- Phonemic awareness: words are made up of individual sounds, or phonemes.

When developing phonemic awareness, the following progression may be considered.

- Isolating individual phonemes: through alliteration, position (first, last), generating words with a given sound.
- Phoneme blending: through putting sounds together to form words, using individual phonemes (c a t ), or onset and rime (c at).
- Phoneme segmenting: through isolating sounds, hearing and counting sounds in words, producing sounds.
- Phoneme manipulation: through adding, deleting or substituting sounds.

Graphophonic knowledge is the understanding of sound–symbol relationships as they apply to the alphabetic principle of written language. Role Play writers can be introduced to the following graphophonic understandings:

- alphabet letter names
- letters representing sounds in words.

It is recommended that letter names be used when students first begin to ask about print, as letter names are constant, whereas sounds vary. It is critical for students to understand that the letter 'G' will always have the name 'G', but that it represents different sounds in 'Gerald' and 'Gayle'.

Sounds can also vary according to accent or dialect; for example, the sound made by 'u' in 'bus' in an English or an Australian accent. When beginning to formally introduce sound–symbol relationships, it is important to use both the letter name and the regular sound; for example, 'This is the letter A and it can represent /a/ as in ran. This is the letter B and it can represent /b/ as in ball'.

## ***Understanding Conventions of Print***

In this phase it is important to draw students' attention to the conventions of written language. Modelled and Shared Reading and Writing provide a springboard for exploring many of these conventions.

It is important for Role Play writers to begin to understand the following conventions of print.

- In English, print is written from left to right and from top to bottom.
- Print and pictures are different.
- The concept of first and last can be applied to letters in a word or words on a page.
- A word is a unit of print with space on either side.
- A word consists of letters, as opposed to digits.
- There is a match between spoken and written words.
- Terms such as 'letter', 'sound', 'word' and 'sentence' constitute different concepts.
- Digits and letters are different.
- There are two versions of letters: upper case and lower case.
- There are a variety of fonts used in texts, but the alphabet remains constant.
- Print is constant.
- Punctuation is used in written text.

## ***Understanding Conventions of Grammar***

At all phases of development it is important that students are exposed to good models of texts so that attention can be drawn to the conventions of grammar. Modelled and Shared Reading and Writing provide a springboard for exploring many of these conventions with Role Play writers.

### ***Punctuation***

It is important to model the use of simple punctuation and to encourage students to have-a-go at using punctuation when 'writing'. Model the use of:

- capital letters
- full stops
- question marks
- exclamation marks.



## Constructing Sentences

It is important to provide many models of how to construct simple sentences. Discuss with students how a sentence is structured.

Highlight the following understandings and associated metalanguage.

- A sentence is a group of words that together make sense.
- A sentence must contain at least one thought or idea.
- A sentence must have a subject and a verb.

For further information about the Conventions aspect, see

*Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn:

- Chapter 3: Conventions
- Chapter 1: Use of Texts.

## Involving Students

### 1 Word Walls

A Word Wall is a designated space in the classroom devoted to displaying words. As words are discovered, introduced and discussed, Word Walls are constructed jointly with the students. Words can be sorted according to the current teaching focus; for Role Play writers the first words to be placed on the Word Wall will usually be the names of the students in the class.

- Jointly create the Word Wall. Begin by displaying enlarged letters of the alphabet (both upper and lower case).
- Add students' names one at a time, pointing out distinctive features, e.g. initial letter, length.
- As students' understandings about print develop, add other words significant to them, e.g. family names, high-frequency words.
- Read, refer to and use the words on the Word Wall during daily print walks, when modelling, and during writing activities.

## Our Word Wall

Dd

Ee

Ff

David

Evelyn

friend

Denise

egg

Fremantle

dog

Figure 4.6

## 2 Word-Sorting Activities

Word-sorting activities develop students' ability to identify and categorise words according to selected criteria. These activities provide an excellent opportunity for Role Play writers to interact with words and letter combinations in a problem-solving context. Word-sorting activities can also be used to develop phonological awareness, graphophonic understandings, and the recognition of personally significant and simple high-frequency words.

Word-sorting activities can be organised in a range of ways.

- *Closed sorts* use criteria chosen by the teacher.
- *Open sorts* require the students to choose the criteria.
- *Guess my sort* involves an individual, a group or the teacher sorting the words and another group deducing the criteria.

Word-sorting activities can be completed using individual word cards provided in envelopes, words on overhead transparencies and an overhead projector, sentence makers and word cards, or even participation in physical sorting activities that require students to move around the room holding word cards.

Role Play writers can be involved in a range of word-sorting activities.

- *Picture sorting* can be used as an introductory sorting activity to focus attention on sorting items into categories. Students can begin by sorting picture cards, e.g. pictures of animals and pictures of people.
- *Beginning-letter sorts* focus attention on beginning letters, e.g. words that begin with the letter 'd' and words that don't.
- *Number-of-letters sorts* focus attention on the length of words.
- *Sound sorts* focus attention on words that have a particular sound, e.g. sorting the pictures into words that have the /t/ sound and those that don't.

Physical word-sorting involves students moving around the classroom holding a word or picture card.

- Provide each student with a word or a picture on a large card.
- Instruct them to move around the room looking for other students' words that would match theirs in some way. When matches are found, these students form a group.
- At the conclusion of a whole-class sort, ask students to stay in the groups they formed. Each group is then asked to hold up their cards and explain why they are together.



### 3 The Letter Can



The Letter Can (a bag, container or box) is an activity to stimulate Role Play writers to continue to develop their graphophonic understandings in the home setting. This activity involves each night selecting a student to take the Letter Can home and return it to school filled with items beginning with the nominated letter. It is an excellent way of involving parents and carers in the learning process.

- Decorate a can (with a lid) with bright paper, e.g. alphabet adhesive paper.
- Include in the can instructions for parents and carers.
- Enclose the selected letter in the can. The same letter may be used over a number of days.
- The following day, when the Letter Can returns, discuss the items included and make a list of them.
- Send the can home with a different student each day. Add any new items to the list.
- Create an alphabet centre to display the labelled items students have brought along.
- Leave blank paper and cards in the alphabet centre for students to have-a-go at making their own alphabet booklet, using the displayed items.

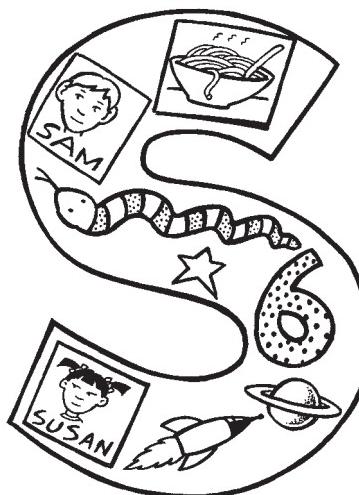
### 4 Letter Collage

The activity Letter Collage provides students with an opportunity to identify letters and to search for pictures of objects that begin with a focus letter. Students draw pictures, take digital photographs or find objects beginning with the focus letter, then glue them onto an enlarged letter shape to make a collage. Students can also be challenged to find examples of the focus letter written in different fonts, using upper or lower case.

- To provide the context for the activity, read aloud several alphabet books, such as *Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten* (Slate & Wolf 2001), *Animalia* (Base 1987), or *26 Letters and 99 Cents* (Hoban 1995).
- Select a focus letter for the activity.
- Have students brainstorm any words they know that begin with the focus letter.
- Organise small groups of students to work with adult supervision.

### **Role Play Writing Phase**

- Provide each group with an enlarged copy of the focus letter. Have available single pictures, magazines, old workbooks, old picture dictionaries, old picture books, blank paper and access to Clipart.
- Have students cut out or draw pictures of objects beginning with the focus letter. Glue pictures or letters onto the enlarged letter shapes. Have the adult supervisors label the pictures on the letters.
- On subsequent occasions, have additional small groups add to the enlarged letter until the collage has been completed.
- Share the completed letter collages with the whole class.



### **5 Exploring Letter Shapes**

This activity helps Role Play writers to become familiar with letter shapes and practise forming letters to create words. A variety of tactile materials such as plasticine, playdough, wool, pipe cleaners, sandpaper, sand trays, finger-paints and shaving cream is provided for students to create specified letters and words.

- Give each student some tactile material, e.g. a sand tray, a piece of plasticine.
- Demonstrate the correct formation of a focus letter.
- Provide time for the students to practise forming the letter and tracing around it.
- Encourage students to also practise forming, tracing and writing familiar words using the focus letter.

### **6 Star of the Day**

Star of the Day helps students recognise their own names and assists in reinforcing concepts of print. It also helps develop phonological and graphophonic understandings. Star of the Day involves selecting one student's name each day to deconstruct and highlight selected features.



- Write students' names on strips of card, making the strip length relative to the length of the name, e.g. **Bob has a short card, Annaliese has a long one.** Place the names in a container.
- Each day select one card; that student becomes the Star of the Day.
- Generate discussion about the written aspects of the chosen student's name — for example, Nikki:
  - use the term 'word' to describe Nikki's name;
  - use the term 'letter' to describe what makes up the name;
  - count the letters;
  - clap the syllables;
  - compare it with other names;
  - identify the different letters;
  - look at the first and other letters using the terms 'capital' and 'small letter' or 'upper and lower case' to describe them;
  - write 'Nikki' in front of students, pointing out the left-to-right progression;
  - write the name on another card, cut the letters apart and have several students, including Nikki, reassemble the name using the original strip as a model;
  - add the word to the Word Wall.
- Repeat this, using each student's name over successive days.

#### *Extensions*

- Have other students ask questions to find out the background and interests of the Star of the Day. Use this information to write some sentences about the Star of the Day, which can be compiled into a class book.
- Have the Star of the Day illustrate the page.
- Use the Star of the Day writing as a basis for other activities, such as Sound Hunter (Activity 8).

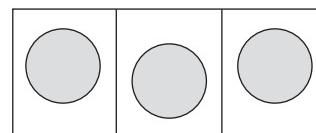
## 7 Elkonin Boxes

Elkonin Boxes (Elkonin 1973) support students in identifying the number of sounds in a word; this will help writers to represent sounds when they have-a-go at writing words. The number of sounds in a word is not always the same as the number of letters; for instance, 'sheep' has five letters but only three sounds.

- Draw up an Elkonin Box on an overhead transparency. Ensure that the box has the same number of spaces as there are sounds in the chosen word.
- Now ask, for example, 'What sound do you hear first in fox?'
- When students respond with the sound, not the letter name, place a counter in the first space.

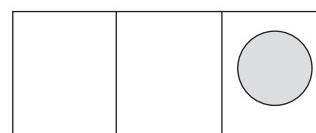
### Role Play Writing Phase

- Repeat the procedure for each sound in the word, saying ‘What sound do you hear next?’
- Place a counter in the second and third spaces respectively when each sound is identified. Finish by counting the number of sounds.



**Figure 4.7 Elkonin box — an example**

As an extension, Elkonin Boxes can be used to help students identify the location of particular sounds in a word. This could be done by giving a word such as ‘dog’ and then asking the students to put a counter in the space where they hear the sound /g/.



**Figure 4.8**

Once students are familiar with Elkonin Boxes, they can use them individually to help with the development of phonological awareness. It is possible for them to identify words using pictures instead of the written word.

## 8 Sound Hunter

Participating in Sound Hunter helps students to develop graphophonic understandings; it is best introduced and practised in the context of a text. Texts such as books, charted songs and poems, modelled writing examples or written messages can provide contexts for writers to hunt for words. Students’ names can also make a good starting point for this activity.

- Choose a specific focus, such as an initial sound, a final sound or a particular letter.
- Select a text that clearly exhibits the chosen focus, e.g. a morning message, a passage from a big book, or a poem.
- Read the text for enjoyment.
- Revisit the text, hunting for the chosen focus, e.g. words containing the letter ‘i’. Students circle or underline the words with the chosen letter. If using a published text, place a large piece of acetate over it so that students can circle or underline the words with a non-permanent marker.
- Discuss the words and the sound (or sounds) represented by the focus letter. Highlight the regular sound of the focus letter.



- Challenge students to find more examples of words with the chosen letter. Provide a range of resources, such as other books, charts and magazines.
- Create a chart of the words found by the students. Leave room for more words to be added to the chart.
- Revisit, discuss and add to the chart on future occasions. Encourage students to use these charts as a reference when writing.

It's Ivy's birthday and she is six.

**Figure 4.9** A sample sentence

As an extension, involve students in sorting the words according to the sounds made by the focus letter.

It's is six	Ivy	birthday
-------------------	-----	----------

**Figure 4.10**

## 9 Sentence Reconstruction

Involving Role Play writers in reconstructing sentences helps to develop their understanding of a sentence as a unit of meaning. A commercial or self-made sentence maker and the cut-and-paste function on the word processor are invaluable tools for this activity.

- Write a simple sentence on a sentence strip or whiteboard; for example, Kerry has a pet fish. The complexity of sentences can increase as students' level of understanding increases.
- Read the sentence together with the students.
- Print each word on a separate card and make a punctuation card.
- As a group, match the cards to the words in the sentence. Discuss the order of the words and the use of punctuation.
- Give the cards to selected students.
- Help the students to reconstruct the sentence in the correct order, e.g. ask 'Who has the first word of the sentence? What word comes next?'
- Consider alternative word orders.

### Role Play Writing Phase

- Have the individual cards and sentence strip available for students to reconstruct at other times.



Figure 4.11

### 10 Morning Message

Creating a Morning Message is a meaningful context in which to introduce and reinforce a variety of concepts of print and conventions of grammar; a brief morning message is created for the students and used as a stimulus for discussion. It should relate to something the students have done or will do during the day.

In the message, students can be encouraged to:

- identify letters that occur in their names;
  - point to the first or last letter of a word;
  - count the letters in a word;
  - count the words in a sentence;
  - match words on individual cards with words in other places, e.g. on the board, on charts, in books;
  - find other words around the room that begin with the same letter;
  - find a word with a given number of letters.
- 
- Decide on a focus, e.g. rhyming words, punctuation, sound-symbol relationships.
  - Write one or two sentences related to a classroom activity or event, e.g. Today is Tuesday. It is Jane's birthday.
  - Highlight and discuss the focus; for example, find a word that starts with /t/.

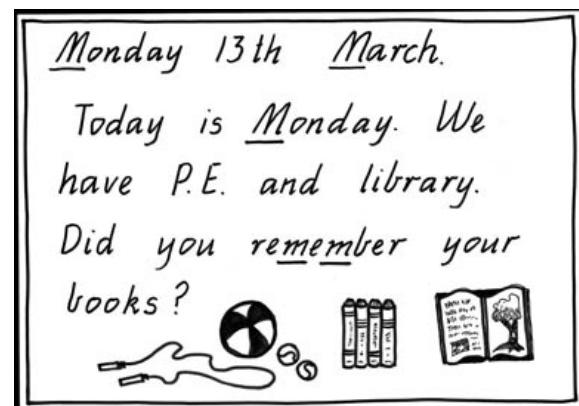


Figure 4.12 A teacher's Morning Message

#### Extension

- Construct one or two related sentences incorporating the focus; have students help with the writing — for instance, suggesting what to write as a sentence or putting in the punctuation.
- Use the writing for other activities.

### 11 Personal Alphabet Chart



Creating Personal Alphabet Charts provides opportunities for Role Play writers to build a bank of personally significant words that can be used in their writing. Each student is provided with a blank



alphabet chart and is encouraged to identify, with parent support, personally significant items for each letter of the alphabet.

- Provide each student with a large alphabet chart that has space for a word and a picture. Enlarge the format provided on the *First Steps* Writing CD-ROM.
- Send the chart and an instruction letter home with the student.
- When the alphabet chart is returned to school, laminate it and attach it to the student's desk as a reference point when writing.

Dear Parent/Carer,

One way children learn the alphabet is to link each letter with the initial letter of someone or something that is familiar to them.

During the next two weeks, talk to your child about people, things and places he or she knows that begin with a particular letter. Print the word or name next to the letter and attach or draw a picture. Start by using family, friends', pets' or street names and then move to choosing favourite foods, places, colours, possessions, TV shows, book characters and sporting teams. When your child knows several things beginning with the same letter, choose the one that seems most important or memorable.

When the chart is returned to school, it will be laminated and attached to your child's desk as a reference point when writing.

Name: <u>Jack B</u>		Writing Map of Development			
		Date:			
Aa Africa	Bb Bruce	Cc cat	Dd Dad	Ee exit	
Ff Freo	Gg Grace	Hh hat	Ii I	Jj Jack	
Kk Kev	Ll Lachlan	Mm Mum	Nn no	Oo octopus	
Pp Pumba	Qq Queen	Rr rat	Ss Sarah	Tt tree	
Uu Uranus	Vv Vivaldi	Ww wizard	Xx xray	Yy yoyo	
Zz Zoo					

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Figure 4.13 Jack's alphabet chart

## **12 Generic Games**

Common games such as I Spy, Bingo and Concentration can be used to support an understanding of the conventions of print, conventions of grammar, graphophonic understandings and phonological awareness. Each one can be used to suit a range of purposes. Less common games are listed as additional ways to consolidate understandings, although they are not a replacement for explicit teaching.

When using the games, it is important to:

- keep them fun and informal;
- use settings that encourage interaction among students;
- embed them in the context of work that is already being done in the classroom;
- ensure the students are fully familiar with how to play them.

The following games are included in this section.

Snap

Dominoes

A Trip to the Moon

I Say . . . You Say . . .

Odd One Out

Hunting for Words

What Can You Show Us?

Tic Tac Toe

### *Snap*

The format of a traditional Snap game is used.

- A set of cards where multiples of four cards match or are related in some way is made up.
- All the cards are dealt to the players.
- In turn, each student overturns one card from his or her hand and places it face up on the table, so forming a central pile.
- When an upturned card matches one on the central pile, the first to place a hand on the central pile says ‘Snap’, and what the criterion for the Snap is, then takes all the cards in the pile.
- The round continues in this way until one student has all the cards.

### *Dominoes*

Make a set of dominoes that has two letters or words on each card. The aim is to join in a line the dominoes sharing a common element; for example, beginning with the same letter, rhyming, or ending with a common sound.



- The game is played in pairs or small groups.
- Each player is dealt the same number of dominoes.
- A student is selected to place the first domino on the playing surface.
- Players take turns to place a domino on the playing surface by selecting a domino that will match one that is already there. A domino may only be added to the beginning or end of the line, and the player must identify the match. If a player cannot place a domino, the turn is missed. The first to place all his or her dominoes is the winner.

### *A Trip to the Moon*

To play this, students sit in a circle.

- Begin the game by saying ‘We’re going on a trip to the moon. You can come if you bring something.’ Students are provided with a criterion for selecting the ‘something’; for example, ‘You need to bring something that rhymes with bay’ or ‘You need to bring something that starts with h’.
- Students then take turns to say ‘I will bring a . . .’. Provide feedback to each one about the choice.

### *I Say . . . You Say*

*I Say . . . You Say* involves a student orally providing words that meet a criterion identified by the teacher.

- Choose a criterion for the game and share it with the students. As an example: ‘Today we are going to play *I Say . . . You Say* with words that begin with f. So let’s begin. I say fat, you say . . .’.
- Students are selected in turn to provide a word to fill the space until it becomes difficult to find matching words.
- A new criterion is then chosen to continue the game.

### *Odd One Out*

In *Odd One Out* students are asked to identify a word — or parts of a word — from a series that contains variation. In a series of three words, two should have something in common, the third being the ‘odd one out’. Depending on the words chosen, this activity can be used to develop a range of understandings related to phonological awareness, as shown in the following examples.

- Syllable awareness: ‘Listen while I say three words. Tell me which one has two parts’.
- Rhyme awareness: ‘Listen while I say three words. Tell me which one doesn’t rhyme with the others’.
- Matching phonemes: ‘Listen while I say three words. Tell me which one does not begin with p’.

## Role Play Writing Phase

As a variation, do not give the criteria. Ask students to pick the odd one out and suggest why it does not belong; for example, ‘Listen while I say three words. Which does not belong?’ However, when beginning to use this variation, make sure the words differ in one aspect only; for instance, if the focus is to identify initial sounds the words should have the same number of syllables, otherwise the students may not focus on the aspect being developed.

### Hunting for Words

Challenge students to go ‘hunting’ for words in the classroom, at home, or in the general environment. The words should fulfil a given criterion, such as beginning with ‘w’, ending with ‘g’ or having four letters.

Students copy the words into their ‘spy pads’, and later they share and discuss them as a class.

### What Can You Show Us? (Richgels, Poremba & McGee 1996)

- Display an enlarged text — for example, a poem or a song — to direct students’ attention to different aspects of language.
- Students share with a partner what they notice about the text, such as capital letters, long or short words, known words or particular sounds.
- Individual students can be asked to show the rest of the class something they notice in the text. They can do this by pointing to features, using highlight tape or using a soluble marker on plastic laminate over the text.

### Tic Tac Toe

Tic Tac Toe is played in the same way as Noughts and Crosses, but instead of using noughts and crosses writers use words to create a sequence of three (diagonally, vertically or horizontally). Player A may have to choose cards with words that begin with the letter ‘b’ and Player B may have to choose cards with words that begin with the letter ‘s’.

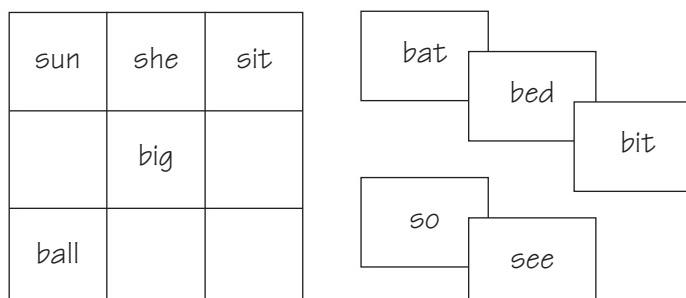


Figure 4.14



Students play the game in pairs.

- Each pair is provided with a playing grid and a selection of cards.
- Each student selects five cards matching the given criterion, such as words that begin with the letter 'b' or words that begin with the letter 's'.
- They then take turns to place cards on the grid.
- The winner is the first to place three words horizontally, vertically or diagonally on the grid.

# PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. topic knowledge, sound–symbol relationships.
- Teach strategies used throughout the writing process, e.g. connecting.
- Teach spelling strategies, e.g. sounding out.
- Model simple publishing alternatives, e.g. text and illustration.
- Model how to find required information in texts.
- Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.

## Organisation of the Processes and Strategies Aspect

There are several differences in the organisation of the Processes and Strategies aspect. Both the Teaching Notes and the Teaching and Learning Experiences (Involving Students) are in the *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

The rationale for this difference in organisation is that the processes and strategies of spelling and writing are not conceptually hierarchical and therefore not phase-specific. In all phases, a variety of writing processes and strategies need to be introduced, developed and consolidated.

What varies from one phase to the next is the growth in:

- the number and integration of strategies used throughout the processes of writing;
- the awareness and monitoring of writing processes;
- the efficiency in use of the processes of writing;
- the ability to articulate the use of the strategies used in the processes of writing;
- the awareness of how the use of processes helps with composing texts.



# Supporting Parents of Role Play Writers

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF ROLE PLAY WRITERS

In this phase students role play the act of writing, experimenting with ways to represent written language either on paper or electronically. Role Play writers experiment by forming scribbles, letter-like symbols or random strings of letters, often using letters from their own names. While Role Play writers may ‘read’ their writing, others cannot.

## Supporting Role Play Writers in the Home

Role Play writers will benefit from a range of experiences in the home setting. Ideas for providing appropriate experiences are available on Parent Cards located on the *First Steps* Writing CD-ROM. Teachers can select appropriate cards for each Role Play writer and copy them for parents to use at home.

### Parent Cards

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>1</b> General Description and How to Support Role Play Writers<br><b>2</b> Encouraging Writing<br><b>3</b> Writing with Your Child<br><b>4</b> Writing and Reading Links<br><b>5</b> Developing Writing through Play | <b>6</b> Developing Understandings about Print<br><b>7</b> Developing Vocabulary<br><b>8</b> Building Language Knowledge through Games |
|---|--|



Also available on the Writing CD-ROM is a parent-friendly version of the Writing Map of Development.

# Experimental Writing Phase

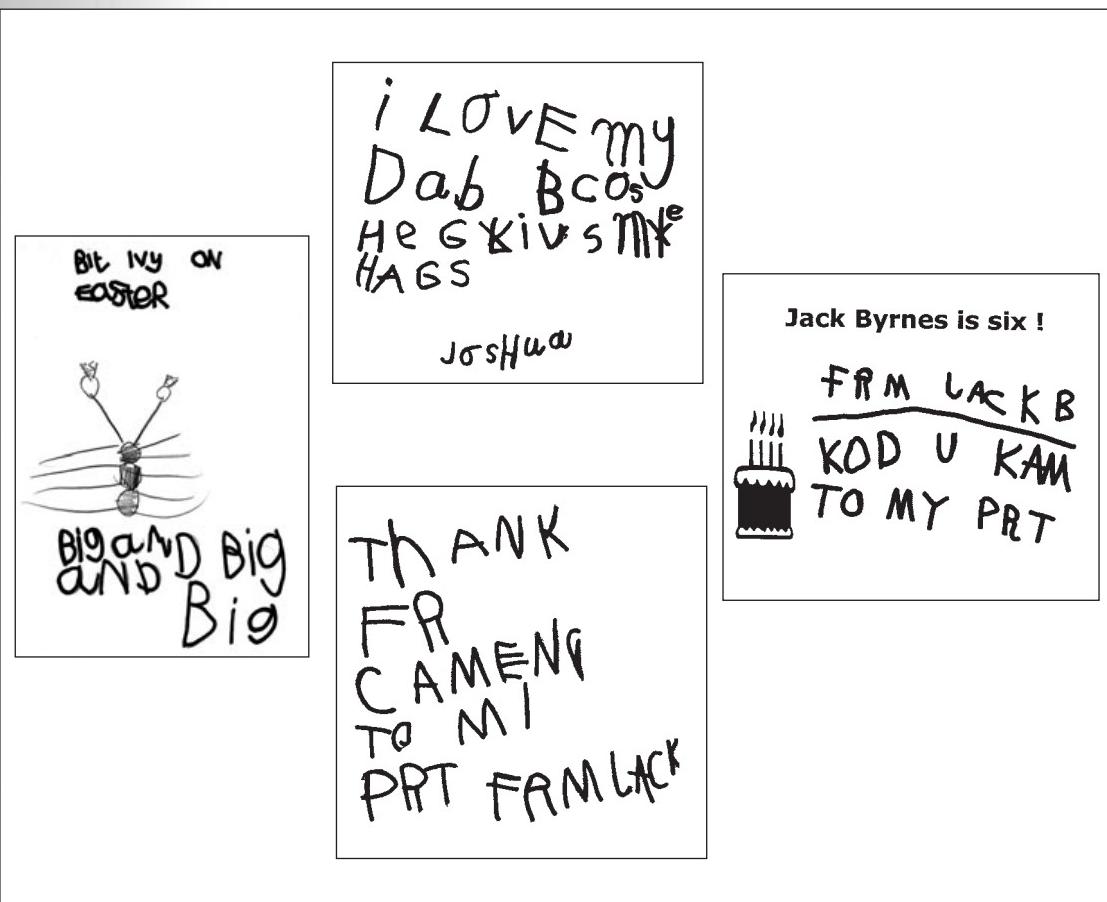


Figure 5.1

## Global Statement

*In this phase, writers are aware that speech can be written down. Experimental writers rely on familiar topics to generate a variety of texts such as greeting cards, lists and letters. They demonstrate an understanding of one-to-one correspondence by representing most spoken words in their written texts. These words may consist of one, two or three letters, and reflect their developing understanding of sound-symbol relationships.*



# Experimental Writing Indicators

## Use of Texts

- ◆ **Experiments with familiar forms of writing,** e.g. lists, captions, retells.
- ◆ **Uses writing with the intention of communicating a message.**
- ◆ **Demonstrates awareness that print contains a constant message,** e.g. recalls the 'gist' of the message over time.
- ◆ **With assistance, finds information in texts appropriate to purpose or interest.**
  - Writes by repeating the same beginning patterns, e.g. I like cats, I like dogs, I like birds.
  - Knows that print and drawings can support each other to convey meaning.
  - Uses familiar topics when writing.
  - Experiments with the metalanguage associated with writing, e.g. purpose, audience, sentence.

## Contextual Understanding

- ◆ **Provides reasons why people write,** e.g. to remember, to say thank you.
- ◆ **States the purpose and audience of own writing,** e.g. I am going to write to grandma to say ...
- ◆ **Talks about how characters and events are represented in literary texts.**
- ◆ **Talks about how people and ideas are represented in informational texts.**
- Expresses a personal opinion within a written text, e.g. I liked the lion at the zoo.
- Assumes the reader shares the context, so may not give sufficient background information, e.g. may tell 'who' but not 'when'.
- Discusses the purpose of familiar written texts, e.g. signs, lists, storybooks.
- Often begins sentences with 'I' or 'we'.

## Conventions

- ◆ **Writes using simple language structures,** e.g. I like . . . , I see. . . .
- ◆ **Demonstrates one-to-one correspondence between written and spoken word,** e.g. word-pointing when reading back own writing.
- ◆ **Begins to demonstrate understanding of the conventions of print.**
- ◆ **Identifies the letters of the alphabet by name or by common sounds.**

- Uses left-to-right and top-to-bottom orientation of print.
- Recognises the difference between numerals and letters when writing.
- Leaves a space between word-like clusters of letters.
- Experiments with print conventions and may overgeneralise, e.g. puts a full stop after each word.
- Uses knowledge of letter names to represent a word, e.g. cd – seed.
- Knows some simple common letter patterns, e.g. tr, ch.
- Represents most words in a sentence using an initial letter.
- Represents a whole word with one, two or three letters, e.g. hp – happy.
- Recognises some words in context.
- Uses knowledge of rhyme to spell.

## Processes and Strategies

- ◆ **Draws upon semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge when writing,** e.g. topic knowledge, sound–symbol relationships.
- ◆ **Uses a limited range of strategies throughout the writing process,** e.g. connecting.
- ◆ **Uses a limited range of strategies to spell,** e.g. sounding out.
- ◆ **Decides how own text will be presented.**
  - Relies on the sounds most obvious to him or her to spell unknown words.
  - Begins to seek correct spelling of some familiar words, e.g. uses environmental print.
  - Asks for assistance with some words.
  - Responses about the writing process reflect limited understanding, e.g. T: How do you write? S: You think of a story and write the words.
  - Talks with others about ideas for own writing.
  - Creates illustrations that match the text.
  - Uses words from the environment in own writing, e.g. word wall.
  - Reads back what has been written.

*Note The terms 'write' and 'writing' encompass the use of traditional tools, such as pen and paper, as well as the use of electronic tools such as computers or mobile phones.*

*The term 'texts' refers to both literary and informational texts and includes visual, spoken or written texts. These may be printed, electronic, live or multimodal.*

# Major Teaching Emphases

## Environment and Attitude (see p. 89)

- Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.
- Foster students' enjoyment of writing.
- Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. spelling, composing sentences.
- Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.

## Use of Texts (see p. 94)

- Continue to expose students to a range of text forms, pointing out purpose and audience.
- Provide opportunities for students to compose a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with writing, and encourage its use.

## Contextual Understanding (see p. 105)

- Discuss the purpose and audience of a range of text forms.
- Discuss some of the decisions writers make when composing texts, and provide opportunities for students to do the same.
- Draw students' attention to the different ways characters or events are represented in literary texts.
- Draw students' attention to the different ways people or ideas are represented in informational texts.
- Highlight and encourage the use of simple devices that writers use to influence readers, e.g. print size, colour.

## Conventions (see p. 114)

- Provide opportunities for students to develop and use new vocabulary.
- Continue to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. high-frequency words.

- Build students' knowledge about words and word parts, e.g. plurals.
- Continue to build phonological awareness and graphophonic knowledge, such as:
  - segmenting words into sounds
  - linking letters with their regular sounds
  - representing sounds heard in words with letters written in the order they are heard
  - recognising that the same letter represents different sounds.
- Reinforce conventions of print.
- Teach the use of commonly used punctuation, e.g. question marks, exclamation marks.
- Teach the use of parts of speech, e.g. nouns, verbs.
- Demonstrate the construction of sentences as units of meaning.
- Model how to group information that is related to compose a text.
- Begin to build students' knowledge about different text forms, e.g. procedures instruct, procedures have steps.

## Processes and Strategies (see p. 130)

- Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. word order, text organisation.
- Continue to teach strategies used throughout the writing process, e.g. self-questioning.
- Continue to teach spelling strategies, e.g. chunking.
- Model simple ways to plan for writing, e.g. talking, drawing.
- Model simple ways to proofread and edit, e.g. adding words or punctuation.
- Continue to model simple publishing alternatives, highlighting purpose.
- Model how to find, record and organise information from texts, e.g. alphabetical order, simple retrieval chart.
- Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.



# Teaching and Learning Experiences

## ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE

### ***Major Teaching Emphases***

- Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.
- Foster students' enjoyment of writing.
- Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. spelling, composing sentences.
- Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.

### Teaching Notes

A classroom community that nurtures Experimental writers is one that promotes 'having-a-go' at writing as important. Experimental writers can be encouraged to become independent writers if there is emphasis on the 'message' of their writing versus a focus on neatness and accuracy of spelling. The focus for developing positive attitudes towards writing as well as a supportive environment for Experimental writers is organised under the following headings.

- Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment
- Fostering Enjoyment of Writing
- Encouraging Experimentation
- Writing as a Social Practice

### ***Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment***

A supportive environment is one in which both the physical aspects and the culture of the classroom are considered. A positive classroom climate is one in which students have opportunities to use and combine printed, spoken, visual and digital processes. These opportunities contribute to students' willingness and eagerness to write.

### ***Physical Environment***

A print-rich environment contains a variety of texts using print for different purposes, and can be created in the classroom in

collaboration with students. This will help them understand how written language is used in meaningful ways in everyday lives.

- *Everyday print* can be referred to in the environment, both inside and outside the classroom, so students can continue to build understandings about the purpose of written language and the way it works. This can be done by talking about everyday print, encouraging students to bring in examples, preparing charts, and taking students for walks around the community pointing out environmental print.
- *Label* the classroom environment. Ensure that labelling of classroom items is both functional and meaningful, e.g. **Look in this cupboard to find lined paper**. This helps students to see how words go together to make sentences and meaning.
- *Word banks* can be jointly constructed and may include names of the students, members of the school community and classroom helpers, the name of the school with street and suburb, and commonly used words. Encourage students to use word banks as a reference when writing.
- *Word Walls* contain words the students are currently learning, e.g. common sight words, the teacher's name, the name of the school. Encourage the use of these words in the students' own writing.
- *Charts* that reflect students' current learning and understandings can be jointly constructed. These 'living' charts are cumulative in that they are added to as new understandings evolve, e.g. **The Letter C Can Make These Sounds**.
- *Poems, songs, riddles and rhymes* that students have been working with can be written on charts and displayed so the students can read them for pleasure or use them as a resource when writing.
- A *reading or writing backpack* can be created for students to take home on a rotational basis. It could include literary or informational texts about different topics, suggested writing activities, discussion questions about the text, and/or suggestions for parents, e.g. **how to use the backpack, topics to write about**.
- A *writing centre* is an area for personal-choice writing where students can experiment with writing in a non-threatening way. Provide a variety of items such as coloured paper, pencils, simple software packages, and picture or electronic dictionaries for students to use. Suggestions for writing — or links to suitable writing websites — may provide stimulus and motivation. A display board placed in this area can be used to show students' completed work.
- A *reading centre* is a relaxed, informal area for independent reading. Providing time for students to read independently helps



them to develop an understanding of the way written language works. Include commercially produced texts, e-texts, and those produced by the class.

- *Learning centres* allow students to explore print in a variety of settings. Centres can contain developmentally appropriate tasks created around a theme, a topic or a text form. The materials needed to complete the tasks should be made available.
- *Creative Corners* can be set up to encourage students to write for real purposes. Texts and ICT resources associated with the theme of the corner can be included.

While it is important that a variety of print is displayed, in order to create a supportive classroom environment it is also essential to model how to interact with and make use of this functional print. This can be achieved in a range of ways.

- Take students on a print walk around the class so that they have the opportunity to ‘read’ and revisit charts they have made and words they have learnt, or to play games such as matching words or phrases.
- Model the use of the charts during Modelled, Shared, Interactive and Guided Writing.
- Encourage students to make use of the charts during independent writing time, e.g. You want to spell Mrs Girdler’s name. Which chart might you use to find that word?
- Model the use of a range of ICT tools used when creating texts.
- Display and discuss writing created by other family members, e.g. grandmothers, elders, siblings.

### ***Classroom Culture***

As well as providing appropriate material and a carefully planned physical environment, it is important to also consider how to create a positive classroom writing culture where students see learning to write as useful and worthwhile.

- Allocate regular periods of time for writing.
- Provide genuine purposes and audiences for writing.
- Have high expectations of all students.
- Praise all attempts at writing.
- Display students’ writing.
- Provide opportunities for students to choose their own topics.
- Provide a range of ICT resources for students to use to create texts.
- Ensure students have a clear sense of what is expected of them.
- Allow time for students to share their writing with others.
- Value writing, and convey this attitude to students.

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- Use language that fosters both unity and diversity.
- Establish and teach procedures for solving challenges during writing, e.g. run out of ideas, need to confer, have-a-go at spelling unknown words.
- Allow students choice within parameters, e.g. choose a publishing format from three provided.
- Incorporate purposeful writing into all learning areas.

## ***Fostering Enjoyment of Writing***

Take every opportunity to foster students' enjoyment of writing. This can be achieved in a range of ways.

- Provide time each day for all students to be involved in meaningful writing sessions where the pleasure of writing is experienced.
- Read to students every day, introducing them to a variety of text forms. Discuss the features of these forms.
- Provide opportunities for students to use a range of ICT resources to combine print, images and sounds, e.g. computers, software programs, interactive whiteboards, digital cameras.
- Provide multiple demonstrations of the strategies effective writers use.
- Model the use of writing as a social practice every day, e.g. note to principal, lunch order.
- Ensure there is a wide selection of writing material in the classroom from which students can choose.
- Set up a post-box to encourage students to write to each other.
- Provide access to a computer to allow students to write and use software programs.
- Plan experiences that will enrich students' language knowledge and provide a shared context for spoken and written activities.
- Make available texts that have been created during Modelled, Shared and Interactive Writing sessions.
- Provide time for students to share their writing with the whole class or with other significant people.
- Encourage family members to respond to their child's writing.
- Provide opportunities for students to write labels or signs for displays and coming events.
- Encourage and organise visits to the school and local libraries so that students are exposed to a wide variety of text forms.
- Invite authors to visit the classroom and share the experiences they have had in creating texts.
- Provide opportunities for students to practise writing using computer software or websites, e.g. Clicker Writer.



## Encouraging Experimentation

It is important to help Experimental writers feel confident to ‘have-a-go’ with written language. Students need to know their approximations will be accepted, their attempts to write will be valued, and they will receive supportive feedback. Experimental writers should be encouraged to reflect on ways to improve in selected focus areas and to experiment with all aspects of writing. This can be done by inviting students to:

- make use of their personal experiences when creating texts;
- have-a-go at writing a variety of texts for real purposes;
- choose their own topics;
- use a variety of strategies when writing;
- use invented spelling to attempt unknown words, e.g. ktn–kitten;
- talk about their writing and the discoveries they have made;
- express their opinions about texts read, heard or written;
- use ICT to communicate a message.

## Writing as a Social Practice

The focus when teaching writing in the classroom is to provide many real-world situations that require the use of written language. The ultimate goal is for students to function in society as literate individuals who can use writing to communicate their ideas, share information, stimulate thinking, formulate questions and influence policy and action.

Experimental writers will begin to understand how writing is used as a social practice through discussions that centre on why people write and what they write. For example, students may identify that Dad chooses to write a shopping list when trying to remember what needs to be purchased at the supermarket; however, when he keeps in touch with friends he writes an email. These situations help students to make connections between writing and life.

For further information about Environment and Attitude, see *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning*, Chapter 5: Establishing a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment.

# USE OF TEXTS

## ***Major Teaching Emphases***

- Continue to expose students to a range of text forms, pointing out purpose and audience.
- Provide opportunities for students to compose a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with writing, and encourage its use.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for supporting Experimental writers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.

- Exposure to a Range of Text Forms
- Opportunities to 'Write' a Range of Texts
- Crafting Personal Voice and Individual Style
- Developing Metalanguage

### ***Exposure to a Range of Text Forms***

Experimental writers will benefit from ongoing opportunities to discuss and interact with a variety of literary and informational texts. Texts selected may include songs, poems, rhymes, fairy or folk tales, traditional or modern stories, simple reports, procedures, messages, timetables or environmental signs. They could be multimodal, class-made, or published materials presented in a range of formats such as books, websites, emails, CD-ROMs or software programs.

During Modelled, Shared and Interactive Writing sessions, show students how successful writers create a range of text forms for different purposes. These could include the creation of texts used to:

- entertain, e.g. rhymes, fairy tales, fables, speech bubbles;
- recount, e.g. diaries, retells, journals;
- describe, e.g. simple reports, labels, menus;
- socialise, e.g. invitations, messages, notes;
- explain, e.g. timetables, classroom routines;
- instruct, e.g. directions to play games, lists, labels;
- persuade, e.g. brochures, catalogues;
- inquire, e.g. interviews.



## ***Opportunities to 'Write' a Range of Texts***

Modelled, Shared and Interactive Writing sessions provide opportunities to demonstrate to Experimental writers how to create a range of texts; creating texts collaboratively provides appropriate support and scaffolding for these writers. Many aspects of writing can be demonstrated.

- Selecting texts forms for different purposes, e.g. I want to tell my friend about my trip, so I will write an email message.
- Identifying the audience before writing.
- Thinking about what the audience might want to know.
- Understanding the link between spoken and written words.
- Finding words displayed in the room.
- Selecting the information to include in the text.
- Choosing a topic to write about.

It is important that Experimental writers be provided with opportunities for purposeful daily writing and be encouraged to experiment with writing different texts. It is through experimentation and having-a-go that these writers develop and consolidate their understandings of written language.

Before, during and after writing, students can be encouraged to talk about their writing and their message. This process helps them clarify their thoughts. Written responses and feedback from the teacher about the message of the text provide a model for students and can motivate further writing.

Understandings about writing are closely linked to understandings about reading. Experimental writers will learn much about written language through varied reading experiences. During Modelled and Shared Reading sessions, many aspects of written language can be reinforced; for instance, discussions about literary texts can focus on characters, setting, and the sequence of events, thus helping Experimental writers to develop the sense of a story. Discussions following sessions using informational texts can focus on content and organisation.

## ***Crafting Personal Voice and Individual Style***

Many things — including a writer's purpose, world view, multiple identity and culture — influence voice within text. Voice in writing is defined in numerous ways.

'Writing words that will make readers listen and be affected.'  
(Tony Romano 2004)

'Voice is the imprint of ourselves on our writing.'

(Don Graves 1994)

'Voice in writing has to do with a unique personality-on-paper.'

(Ralph Fletcher 1993)

At this phase, it is important to help students understand the concept of voice. This can be done during Modelled or Shared Reading sessions, or when Reading to Students.

- Show and discuss examples of sentences, passages or entire texts that demonstrate voice.
- Share samples of students' writing that have voice.
- Discuss how the author's voice keeps the reader interested.

Modelled, Shared, Interactive and Guided Writing sessions can also help Experimental writers to understand and develop voice in their own writing. This can be done in a range of ways.

- Modelling how personal thoughts and feelings can add voice to writing.
- Modelling how words can be changed to add voice; for example, 'Cats are good pets' becomes 'My cat Rex is the cutest cat ever'.
- Providing opportunities for students to write about topics that are personally important.
- During class discussions, pointing out examples of voice in published texts. Make a note of these words so that students can begin to use them when they write.

### ***Developing Metalanguage***

The vocabulary used to talk about language is known as metalanguage, and when students are able to use it to talk competently about their own writing and learning, it helps them to understand how language operates. Developing metalanguage also helps students to understand the support and feedback provided by teachers.

To help Experimental writers continue to use terms associated with writing and written language, it is important to use metalanguage as part of everyday teaching. This can be done across learning areas, as part of targeted discussions, during explicit demonstrations, during one-on-one conversations with students, or as part of planned Modelled, Shared, Interactive or Guided Writing sessions.

Certain terms tend to be more prominent when focusing on different aspects of writing; for example, when working with Experimental writers, consider the use of the following terms.



- Use of Texts: captions, recipes, menus, procedure, author, narrative, recount.
- Contextual Understanding: purpose, audience, characters, events.
- Conventions: sound, question mark, plural, nouns, capital letters.
- Processes and Strategies: publishing, sounding out, revising, planning.

For further information about the Use of Texts aspect, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn:

- Chapter 1: Use of Texts
- Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

## Involving Students

### 1 Read and Retell

Read and Retell (Browne & Cambourne 1989) is a simple activity that is flexible in its use and provides an opportunity for students to develop an understanding of the purpose, audience and structure of a text. Retelling requires Experimental writers to listen to a text, organise key information in it they have understood, then share their retell with others. Retells at the Experimental Writing phase can be created and shared orally, as drawings or through drama. Traditional children's literature — such as fables, myths and fairy tales or songs, rhymes and picture books — offers excellent texts for retelling with Experimental writers.

Experimental writers will benefit from creating different retells.

- *Oral to oral* — students listen to a text read aloud by the teacher and retell it orally.
- *Oral to drawing* — students listen to a text read aloud by the teacher and retell by drawing.
- *Oral to drama* — students listen to a text read aloud by the teacher and retell through drama.
- *Written to oral* — students 'read' a text and retell it orally.
- *Written to drawing* — students 'read' a text and retell by drawing.

The following procedure can be adapted to suit the purpose, context, focus and type of retell being used.

- Select a text and display the title.
- Read the text aloud to students.

## Experimental Writing Phase

- Allow students to hear or ‘re-read’ the text as many times as necessary.
- Discuss its purpose and form with students.
- Discuss the audience for the students’ retell.
- Provide time for students to prepare their retells (in any way mentioned above).
- Select some students to share their retells.

Some ways to support Experimental writers during retelling sessions are:

- using puppets as an aid for oral retells;
- using illustrations from a text;
- providing simple props;
- providing overhead transparencies for students to draw and retell;
- having students create Story Maps that can be used when retelling.

## 2 Story Maps

Story Maps are graphic representations of some or all of the elements of a literary text, showing the relationships between elements. They could include characters, setting, events or objects. Story Maps provide a practical way for students to organise their thinking and develop an understanding of the structure of a range of literary texts. Creating them at the Experimental phase helps students to develop an understanding of the sequence of events in a text.

Story Maps can vary greatly according to the purpose and audience of the activity, the phase of development of the students and the nature of the text. Experimental writers benefit from creating a range of different maps.

- *Basic maps* — a graphic representation of some of the main elements, such as the setting, characters, events, problem or resolution.
- *Chronological maps* — chronological representation of the sequence of events in a clockwise direction.
- *Geographical maps* — using the setting as the central focus to illustrate how the story unfolds.
  
- Read the text to students or provide time for independent reading.
- Have students draw elements on cards or stick-on notes. Using these allows the elements to be moved or positions changed.
- Direct students to place the cards or notes to create a draft Story Map.
- Provide them with time to share and compare their draft maps with others, and to refine them as needed.



- Encourage students to add key words or phrases to their maps.
- Provide time for them to use their maps as a basis for retelling the text to others.

### **3 Wall Stories**

Refer to Chapter 4: Role Play Writing Phase, p. 58.

### **4 Text Innovation**

Refer to Chapter 4: Role Play Writing Phase, p. 56.

### **5 Sketch Journal**

A Sketch Journal provides Experimental writers with the opportunity to base their writing around their personal experiences. Time is provided for them to participate in an ‘Ideas Walk’ outside the classroom, and to sketch things of interest; the sketches are used as a stimulus for writing. Writing about personal events will assist students to develop a sense of ‘personal voice’.

- Provide each student with a Sketch Journal (two or three blank pages stapled together and attached to a clipboard).
- Take students outside on an ‘Ideas Walk’ and invite them to find at least three things of interest to sketch. Explain that the pictures need only be sketches, not drawings in great detail.
- Upon returning to the classroom, have students talk in pairs about what they drew, and explain the stimulus it provides for an idea to write about.
- Provide time for them each to select one of their drawings and write about it.
- Have some students share their texts with the whole class. Ask each one to explain how he or she chose what to draw and write about, e.g. I drew the swings and wrote about when my grandpa pushed me up high on the swing.
- Discuss how each one text is special to that person, and how people write from their memories. Explain that writers can share their thoughts and feelings, and that this is the idea of voice in writing.
- Collect students’ completed pieces and compile them into a book to be placed in the class library.

### **6 Let’s Read Your Voice**

Routman (2000) suggests that having students write poetry is one way that allows them to show their ‘voice’. Students can often write more easily, confidently and with voice about personal

## Experimental Writing Phase

experiences and interests such as sports, school, friends, pets, family, and likes and dislikes. By providing them with a simple framework and an opportunity to brainstorm topics of interest, simple poems reflecting the use of voice can be created.

### Framework

- Read aloud sample poems that use the framework.
- Make the points that a poem can be about anything, does not have to rhyme, may use invented spelling, and may use few words.
- Brainstorm possible topics for poems, e.g. pets, likes, sport, family.
- Provide time for students to decide what they will write about. Have several describe to the whole class what they might like to write about.
- Provide time for them to create their poems.
- Invite students to share their completed poems with the class. Orally sharing poems allows other students to hear the voice of the poet.
- Encourage discussion by asking 'What did we learn about the poet that we didn't know before?'
- Collate the completed poems into a class book.

Noun  
Looks  
Sounds like  
Feels like  
Personal response

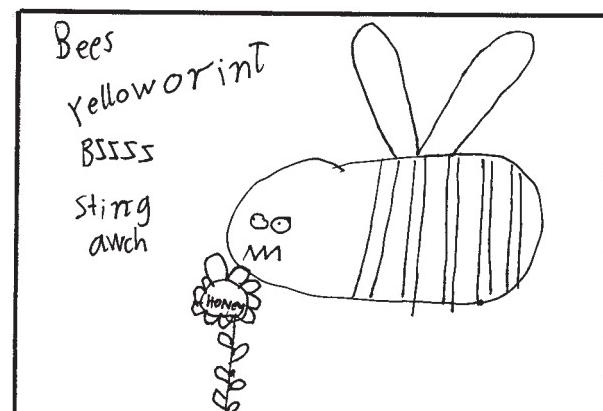


Figure 5.2 Students' voice expressed in poetry



## 7 Guess the Author

Guess the Author exposes students to chosen authors with the intent of investigating their particular voices; a selection of texts by several authors is needed to complete this activity. Students are required to listen to readings of selected texts and determine which author the lines belong to; for example, ask ‘Are these the words of Dr Seuss or Mem Fox?’

Over a period of time, read a selection of texts by one author, such as Mem Fox or Dr Seuss. After each reading, discuss the author’s writing style and voice.

- Select several sentences from a text written by one of the chosen authors. The text need not be one the students have heard before.
- Read the sentences and have students identify the author.
- Encourage them to discuss their reasons for suggesting a particular author.
- Create a chart with the class, identifying the individual style and voice of the chosen author.

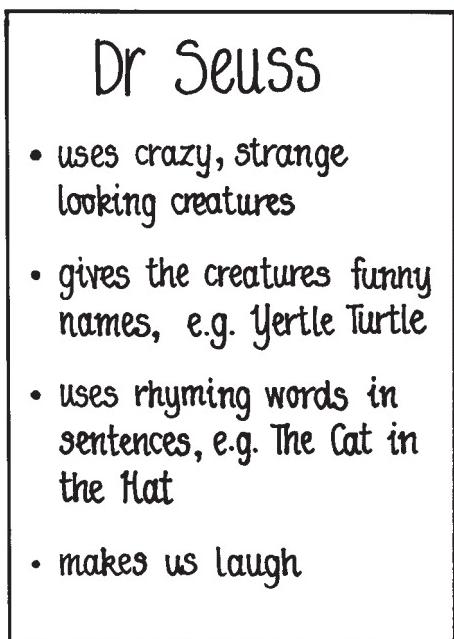


Figure 5.3 A collaboratively created chart about Dr Seuss

## 8 Writing Bag



Writing Bag is an activity that provides a school-home link and encourages students to write for real purposes and audiences. It provides an excellent opportunity to foster a sense of personal voice, as students write about topics that are personally significant. Writing Bag also provides opportunities to write for purposes that

## Experimental Writing Phase

may not be catered for in the school setting, such as an invitation to a family gathering or a thank-you note for a gift.

- Organise a Writing Bag. It may consist of a bag, a backpack or a small box containing:
  - a range of plain, lined, coloured paper and card;
  - recycled greeting cards;
  - pictures from magazines, catalogues, discarded picture books;
  - small blank books already made up (several blank pages stapled or stitched together with a card cover);
  - envelopes;
  - pencils and markers;
  - glitter, glue and tape;
  - a pencil sharpener;
  - an alphabet chart;
  - a list of high-frequency and personally significant words;
  - a written explanation for parents or carers.
- Brainstorm some suggestions with students as to different writing they can do at home.
- Send the Writing Bag home with a different student each day.
- Provide time for each to share completed writing with the class.
- Create a space where students can display their writing.

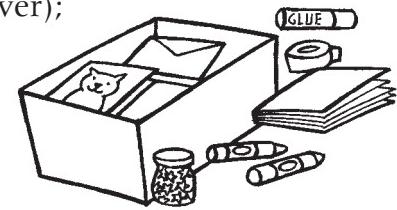


Figure 5.4

## 9 Class News Book

The Class News Book is an effective way to help students understand that written messages remain constant. This activity involves modelling the writing of selected students' news each day.



- Make a Class News Book out of large pieces of paper.
- Model the writing of one or two sentences from a selected student's news each day.
- Highlight particular language features, concepts of print and conventions, e.g. capital letters, full stops, sentences.
- Invite the selected student to illustrate the sentences.
- Create opportunities for the whole class to re-read sentences.

This activity could form part of a home reading sheet, or Class Newspaper: students take home a copy of each day's news on a single sheet to share with their families. This page could include illustrations to assist students to remember the news that they worked on each day.

## 10 Creative Corners

Young writers need to be provided with time and encouraged to 'write' independently in meaningful contexts. Access to a variety of Creative Corners, based around different themes, will provide them with opportunities to use writing for different purposes. Providing materials associated with the theme will allow them to practise written language in a stimulating, supportive and familiar setting.

- Select one of the Creative Corners to set up the activity in the classroom.
- Introduce the students to the items that form part of that corner, paying particular attention to the writing opportunities available.
- Discuss the type of language and actions used in this setting.
- Model some of the types of writing linked to this Creative Corner.
- Provide students with the opportunity to 'play' in the corner.
- Praise any attempts at using written language as part of the Creative Corner.

In addition to a variety of writing implements, other materials could include any of the following.

### The Shop

- price tags
- order pads
- dockets
- posters
- catalogues
- scanning machine

### The Home Corner

- shopping lists
- telephone messages
- address book
- recipe book
- message board
- mobile phone
- computer
- answering machine

### The Weather Corner

- laminated maps
- pointers
- weather chart with symbols such as cloud, sun, rain, wind, lightning
- laminated chart to write the weather on
- website for local weather forecast

## Experimental Writing Phase

### The Health Clinic

- telephone message pad
- appointment book
- In/Out sign
- opening hours sign
- poster about care of body
- patient notes/files
- eye chart

### The Bank

- notepaper
- ATM cards
- ATM machine
- deposit and withdrawal forms
- application forms

### The Restaurant

- order book
- menus
- specials board
- bills
- restaurant signs
- name tags
- place mats
- drinks list
- telephone

Order 

Table number: 2

Guest name: K EV

Order 1. L R T A

2. C H I C N

3. I C S R E M

Server's name: L A C K

Restaurant Bill \$\$\$\$

Table number: 2

Cost: \$10

card

cash

cheque



Thanks for eating here.

Server's name: L A C K

Figure 5.5 Creative Corners — text generated by a student



# CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Discuss the purpose and audience of a range of text forms.
- Discuss some of the decisions writers make when composing texts, and provide opportunities for students to do the same.
- Draw students' attention to the different ways characters or events are represented in literary texts.
- Draw students' attention to the different ways people or ideas are represented in informational texts.
- Highlight and encourage the use of simple devices that writers use to influence readers, e.g. print size, colour.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for helping Experimental writers to develop contextual understanding in writing is organised under the following headings.

- Understandings about Purpose and Audience
- Exploring Decisions Writers Make
- Representing Characters and Events in Literary Texts
- Representing People and Ideas in Informational Texts
- Use of Devices

### ***Understandings about Purpose and Audience***

Experimental writers continue to benefit from opportunities to develop an understanding that writing has a purpose and communicates a message to an intended audience. While Modelled and Shared Reading sessions provide opportunities to discuss the purpose and audience of different texts, Modelled, Shared and Interactive Writing sessions provide opportunities to demonstrate writing for a range of real purposes and audiences; for instance, ‘Let’s write a note to the cleaner to apologise for the paint that got spilt on the carpet’.

Students need to develop an awareness that all texts are written for a purpose and that writing serves many functions; identifying texts by their primary purpose enables students to take into account contextual understandings associated with them. This resource categorises texts according to eight purposes, and writers usually employ certain forms of text to meet these purposes.

## **Experimental Writing Phase**

- To entertain
- To recount
- To socialise
- To inquire
- To describe
- To persuade
- To explain
- To instruct

At this phase, students benefit from having a particular audience for their writing and knowing that this means there will be a response to their writing efforts; possible audiences for Experimental writers could include family, friends, class members, teachers, older students in the school, or a classroom toy. Writing for these audiences helps students see writing as a meaningful experience.

### ***Exploring Decisions Writers Make***

Experimental writers need support to develop an understanding that decisions are made when creating texts. Constantly encouraging students to question authors' choices helps them to develop the foundations of critical literacy. Modelled, Shared and Interactive Writing sessions provide opportunities to demonstrate the types of questions that authors ask themselves, and how they make choices about these questions.

#### *Purpose and audience*

- Why am I writing this text?
- Who am I writing for?
- What do they already know?
- What kind of language do I need to use?

#### *Content and form*

- What do I want to tell them?
- What ideas do I need to include?
- What is the best way to get my message across, e.g. letter, list?
- How will I organise my ideas?

During these sessions, discussions and demonstrations should include the use of reflective commentary and metalanguage.

### ***Representing Characters and Events in Literary Texts***

Shared Reading sessions can also provide an opportunity to highlight and discuss decisions that authors make when creating texts.

- Why do you think the artist has chosen to illustrate the text in a particular way? How else could it have been done?



- How do the illustrations support the text?
- How does the author represent the characters or people in the text? For example, 'In this book the pirates are all scary. Are all pirates scary? What other words or pictures could have been used to make the pirates not be scary?'
- Do you know any people who are like the characters in the story? Who are they? How are they the same? How are they different?
- Why do you think the author chose . . . as the name for this character?
- What other names would have been suitable for the characters or people in this text?

## ***Representing People and Ideas in Informational Texts***

Texts from across the curriculum — and other authentic reading materials — will provide opportunities for students to discuss how people and ideas have been represented in particular ways. Magazines, advertising brochures, food packaging, posters, science and society, and environmental texts can provide stimulus for discussions.

- Who wrote the text?
- Who is in the text?
- How is the person (or people) represented in the text?
- Do you know anyone who is like the person in the text? Who is it? How are they the same? How are they different?
- Have you read any other texts on this topic?
- Did that text say anything different about the topic?
- How do the illustrations, photographs or diagrams support the text?

## ***Use of Devices***

As well as knowing the purpose, the audience and the content of their writing, writers make decisions about the linguistic and print devices they will use. The focus for Experimental writers is on modelling, discussing and encouraging the use of simple language and graphic devices that writers use. These could include:

- words to describe appearance, e.g. short, thin, tall;
- words to describe actions, e.g. ran, jumped, screamed;
- words to describe emotions, e.g. scared, sad;
- repetition, e.g. It was a big, big spider;
- print and font size, e.g. Important, scary;
- different-coloured words, e.g. the instructions are written in red print.

For further information about the Contextual Understanding aspect, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 2: Contextual Understanding.

## Involving Students

### 1 Family Message Journals



Wollman-Bonilla (2000) suggests that Family Message Journals are a great way for students to write for real purposes and audiences. These journals are notebooks in which students write messages to their families each day and family members write replies. The messages can be sent via email if students and families have such access. The topics students write about are related to classroom and school events; this writing is personally meaningful and is a powerful communication tool.

- Provide each student with a booklet or notebook to be used as a journal.
- Model the writing of a Message Journal entry. Possible questions might be:
  - Who will I write to? e.g. Dear Mum;
  - What will I tell her about? e.g. the science experiment with apples;
  - What are some of the things I could tell her? e.g. how we cut the apple, what colours were inside.
- Provide time for students to share with a partner who they will write to and what they will write about.
- Allow time for them to write in their Family Message Journals.

It is important to inform parents about the purpose and their role in supporting the use of the Family Message Journal — sending home a letter would be very helpful. However, it is important that this activity does not become a chore for the students or the families.

### 2 Message Board

A Message Board is a place to keep announcements, reminder notes, or other short messages for a range of audiences. Making regular use of a Message Board enables Experimental writers to develop an understanding that writing has different purposes and audiences.

- Jointly design, create and locate a Message Board for classroom use. Ensure the board is easily accessible by students, parents and other teachers.
- Model the use of the Message Board by jointly constructing several texts, e.g. reminders, announcements, lunch menus.



- Encourage students to post notes to others.
- Once a number of notes have been posted, informally discuss the collection in relation to any of the following:
  - audience, e.g. parents, teachers, absent students, principal;
  - purpose, e.g. notes that explain, ask questions, remind;
  - form, e.g. list, letter, memo.
- Discuss any similarities or differences in the messages.

As an extension, have a special area on the Message Board for messages that celebrate any positive moments of the day. These can be referred to and celebrated at the end of each day.

### 3 What Have We Written?

What Have We Written? is an opportunity to model to students how to keep a record of what has been written and for whom. This helps Experimental writers to develop an understanding that there are many different purposes and audiences for writing.

- Enlarge the format provided on the *First Steps* Writing CD-ROM.
- Model how to record the purposes, audiences and topics that have been covered by the class during Modelled, Shared and Interactive Writing sessions.
- Add to the record sheet on a regular basis, highlighting the purpose and audience of all writing.

Reflecting on these records throughout the year will help students understand the many different purposes of writing and the numerous audiences a writer writes for.

What Have We Written?		
Why We Wrote (Purpose)	Who We Wrote To (Audience)	What We Wrote About (Topic)
to invite	Gran	Stay on the holidays
to tell how to	Class	Making pancakes
to remember	Me	Bring my book

Figure 5.6 A class chart

## **4 What's Needed?**

What's Needed? is an activity that helps Experimental writers consider information to be included in a text to suit a particular purpose and different audiences. Audiences require varying amounts of detail according to their knowledge or the occasion involved; for example, an invitation to a community member to attend a class function will need more detail than an invitation to parents or the principal.

- Discuss the purpose for writing, e.g. invitation to a class open day.
- Brainstorm different audiences for the message, e.g. parents, community members, the principal, other classes.
- Jointly construct an invitation for each audience. Have students note what information is needed in each message, and any additional information required. Discuss why this is important.
- Discuss differences between invitations; for example, if the audience was not at the school, the address had to be included.

Encourage students to consider audience needs when writing across all learning areas.

## **5 Text Innovation**

Refer to Chapter 4: Role Play Writing Phase, p. 56.

## **6 What Might They Look Like?**

What Might They Look Like? allows students to decide how characters, people or objects in a text can be represented. Creating a drawing of characters, people or an object before a text has been viewed helps Experimental writers to understand that authors and illustrators make decisions when creating texts.

- Read an unfamiliar text without showing students the illustrations.
- After reading the text, allocate students a character, person or object. Ensure they have still not seen the illustrations.
- Have them draw their impression of the character, person or object.
- When the drawings have been completed, discuss the decisions the students had to make.
  - Is your character male or female?
  - Is he or she tall or short, large or small?
  - What clothes is your character wearing?
  - What colour hair does your character have? Is it long or short?
  - What does your object look like? What is around it?



- Discuss what was heard in the text to help make these decisions; for example, ‘It said she had blonde hair like straw’.
- Invite students to share their drawings.
- Provide time for them to compare their drawings with the illustrations in the text.
- Discuss the similarities and differences found, and speculate on the choices of the author and/or illustrator.

## 7 Word Choices

Word Choices helps students to understand some of the decisions authors make when creating a text. Students preview a selection of words from a text and determine which form of text the words come from. Useful texts include junk-mail catalogues, greeting cards, school newsletters and recipes.

- Select 8–10 key words from a chosen text. Write each word on a card.
- Display and read each word with the class.
- Have students make predictions, based on the selected words, about the form of text the words have come from, e.g. ask ‘Is it a narrative or a procedure?’
- Have them justify their predictions, e.g. ‘I think it is a narrative because of the words forest, magic and talking trees’.
- Have them now use the words to make and justify other predictions about the text, e.g. the characters, the topic.
- With the students, collaboratively sort the words — for instance, into words about where the text takes place and words about what the characters look like.
- Discuss some of the decisions the author made, e.g. about setting, characters, details.
- After the text has been read, compare the predictions made by the students with the content in the text.

## 8 Catch the Reader



Catch the Reader allows Experimental writers to identify devices used by authors. Raising students’ awareness of simple devices is essential as a starting point for them to begin experimenting with devices in their own writing; these could include print size, font selection, colour, size of characters or people, and repetition. At first use, it is beneficial to focus on one device at a time.

## Experimental Writing Phase

- Show students a variety of texts selected because of their use of a chosen device.
- Discuss the different effects created by the device, e.g. big letters sound like someone shouting, shaky print shows a scary voice.
- Have students in groups search magazines to find other examples where this device has been used. Allow time for them to create a group chart of their findings.
- Encourage them to use the devices discovered in their own writing and illustrations.

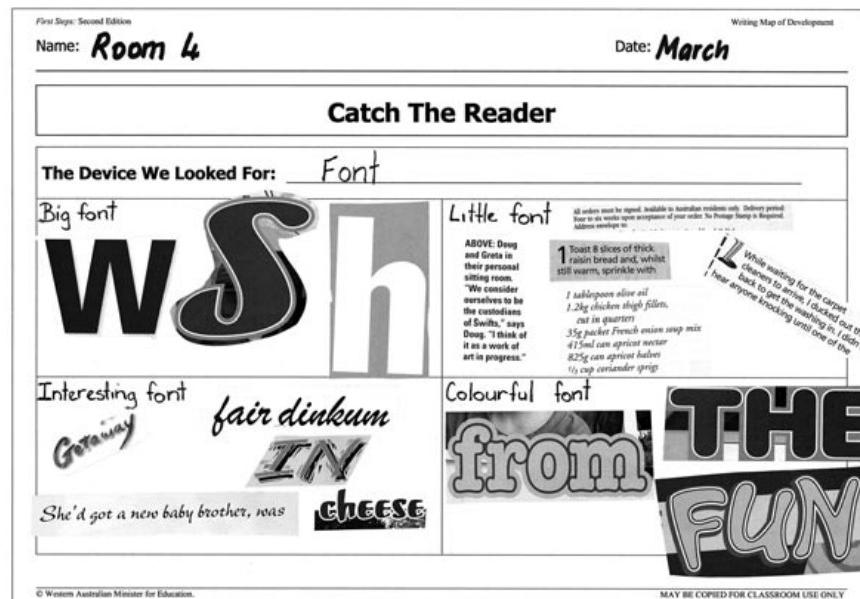


Figure 5.7

## 9 Character Visualisation

Character Visualisation helps Experimental writers to make decisions about what characters look like. This activity involves having them sketch the mental images created when hearing a poem. Short, quirky poems that have strong character descriptions work best for this activity, such as poems by Shel Silverstein, Judith Nicholls, John Foster, Michael Rosen or Spike Milligan.

- Select a poem and read it to the class. Place a strong emphasis on drawing out the character by the way the poem is read.
- Invite the students to draw a picture of the character they ‘see’ in their head. Encourage them to label the decisions they made about representing the character.



- Have them share their drawings with a partner.
- Display the drawings with the poem.
- Re-read the poem a few days later and invite the students to add to or change their drawings.
- Provide time to discuss any changes, e.g. 'I added tomato sauce on her face because in the poem she eats all the time and I think she's a messy eater'.

As an extension to this activity, give each student a copy of the poem and help them to cut up the text and attach the lines to relevant parts of their drawings.

# CONVENTIONS

## ***Major Teaching Emphases***

- Provide opportunities for students to develop and use new vocabulary.
- Continue to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. high-frequency words.
- Build students' knowledge about words and word parts, e.g. plurals.
- Continue to build phonological awareness and graphophonic knowledge, such as:
  - segmenting words into sounds
  - linking letters with their regular sounds
  - representing sounds heard in words with letters written in the order they are heard
  - recognising that the same letter represents different sounds.
- Reinforce conventions of print.
- Teach the use of commonly used punctuation, e.g. question marks, exclamation marks.
- Teach the use of parts of speech, e.g. nouns, verbs.
- Demonstrate the construction of sentences as units of meaning.
- Model how to group information that is related to compose a text.
- Begin to build students' knowledge about different text forms, e.g. procedures instruct, procedures have steps.

## **Teaching Notes**

The focus for supporting Experimental writers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.

- Building Vocabulary
- Building Word Knowledge
- Developing Phonological Awareness and Graphophonic Knowledge
- Reinforcing Conventions of Print
- Understanding Conventions of Grammar
- Building Text-Form Knowledge



## **Building Vocabulary**

All students, when they arrive at school, already have an oral vocabulary based on the speech variety and experiences at home. Research has shown that vocabulary acquisition is crucial to academic development (Baker, Simmons & Kameenui 1998), so it is important for teachers to ensure Experimental writers have every opportunity to expand their vocabulary across a broad range of contexts and experiences.

## **Developing Vocabulary**

Creating a rich language environment that includes reading aloud, reciting poems and rhymes, singing songs and playing with language is a starting point for developing understandings about written language. Experimental writers can be supported in developing their vocabulary in the following ways.

- Valuing and providing time for play and informal talk.
- Valuing existing speech variety if non-standard or in an additional language or dialect.
- Modelling the use of language in different contexts.
- Introducing subject-specific vocabulary across the curriculum, e.g. the language of mathematics.
- Providing experiences through activities outside the classroom, e.g. trips or excursions, and activities inside the classroom, e.g. manipulating materials, inviting guest speakers, or capitalising on any impromptu events.
- Discussing written words at every opportunity, pointing out the author's choice and why it is the 'best fit' in the context.
- Involving students in meaningful word-play activities.
- Jointly constructing Word Walls featuring the words students are learning, e.g. high-frequency words.
- Providing opportunities for students to 'read' and 'write' for a range of purposes.
- Immersing students in a range of texts.
- Using a rich vocabulary in all contexts.
- Talking about talk.
- Developing language across all learning areas, e.g. mathematics and science.

## **Building a Bank of Words that Are Automatically Spelt and Used**

At all phases of development students copy, recall and have-a-go at spelling words during independent writing. The bank of words that can be automatically spelt and used can include high-frequency

words, personally significant words, topic or theme words, or signal words.

Exploring and using these words in reading, writing and any across-curriculum activities will help to reinforce their recognition and use. For some students, ongoing systematic instruction is essential to help them develop automaticity; for others, the repeated reading and writing of texts helps them develop the ability to spell a bank of words automatically.

It is important to help Experimental writers continue to develop a small bank of words that can be automatically spelt and used. This could include the following.

#### *High-frequency words*

These occur frequently in written texts; sources include *Five Hundred Words Most Frequently Used in Children's Writing* (Gentry & Gillet 1993), *One Hundred High Frequency Words* (Fountas & Pinnell 1998) and *One Hundred Most Frequent Words in Writing* (Routman 2000).

#### *Personally significant words*

These are words significant to each student, such as the names of friends, addresses, the school name and the name of the town or city.

### **Building Word Knowledge**

As students' understandings of graphophonics develop, it is also beneficial to extend their knowledge of words, word parts and the way words work. By providing experiences that increase their word awareness, Experimental writers will begin to develop a broader understanding of the English spelling system.

During Modelled, Shared and Interactive writing sessions with Experimental writers, teachers can model the use of the following.

- Plural endings, e.g. s
- Contractions, e.g. I'm, can't
- Suffixes, e.g. ing, ed
- Homophones, e.g. to, two, too
- Compound words, e.g. sunshine, butterfly

### **Developing Phonological Awareness and Graphophonic Knowledge**

Phonological awareness is the ability to hear, combine and manipulate the different sound units of spoken words. This may include the following.



- Word awareness: spoken language is made up of words; words are representations of objects (chair), emotions (love) and concepts (height); words can rhyme.
- Syllable awareness: some words have a single syllable and others have more than one.
- Onset and rime awareness: words with a single syllable are made up of onsets and rimes.
- Phonemic awareness: words are made up of individual sounds, or phonemes.

When developing phonemic awareness, the following progression may be considered.

- Isolating individual phonemes: through alliteration, position (first, last), generating words with a given sound.
- Phoneme blending: through putting sounds together to form words, using individual phonemes (c a t ), or onset and rime (c at).
- Phoneme segmenting: through isolating sounds, hearing and counting sounds in words, producing sounds.
- Phoneme manipulation: through adding, deleting or substituting sounds.

Graphophonic knowledge is the understanding of sound–symbol relationships as they apply to the alphabetic principle of written language. Experimental writers can be introduced to the following graphophonic understanding:

a letter has a name and represents different sounds in words;  
e.g. This is the letter 'g' and it represents different sounds in 'gate'  
and 'giraffe'.

## ***Reinforcing Conventions of Print***

In this phase, it is important to continue to draw students' attention to the conventions of written language. Modelled and Shared Reading and Writing provide a springboard for exploring many of these conventions.

It is important for Experimental writers to understand the following conventions of print.

- In English, print is written from left to right and from top to bottom.
- Print and pictures are different.
- The concept of first and last can be applied to letters in a word or words on a page.
- A word is a unit of print with space on either side.
- A word consists of letters, as opposed to digits.
- There is a match between spoken and written words.

- Terms such as ‘letter’, ‘sound’, ‘word’ and ‘sentence’ constitute different concepts.
- Digits and letters are different.
- There are two versions of letters: upper case and lower case.
- There are a variety of fonts used in texts, but the alphabet remains constant.
- Print is constant.
- Punctuation is used in written text.

### ***Understanding Conventions of Grammar***

At all phases of development it is important that students are exposed to good models of texts so that attention can be drawn to the conventions of grammar. These include conventions associated with punctuation, parts of language, sentence structure and overall text construction. It is important that these conventions be introduced, revisited and practised in meaningful contexts.

Modelled and Shared Reading and Writing provide a springboard for exploring many of these conventions.

### ***Punctuation and Parts of Speech***

It is beneficial for Experimental writers to be able to use, talk about and understand:

- punctuation marks, e.g. question marks, exclamation marks;
- parts of speech, e.g. nouns, verbs;
- function of parts of speech, e.g. words used to mark questions, such as who, when, what, why.

### ***Constructing Sentences***

It is important to continue to provide many models of how to construct simple sentences. Discuss with students how a sentence is structured. Highlight the following understandings and associated metalanguage.

- A sentence is a group of words that together make sense.
- A sentence must contain at least one thought or idea.
- A sentence must have a subject and a verb.
- A question differs from a statement.

### ***Building Text-Form Knowledge***

Building students’ knowledge about text forms assists them to begin to create a range of texts and to understand the purpose of those texts. Students benefit from reading different examples of the same text form, making comparisons and identifying defining features.



Modelled, Shared and Guided Reading and Writing sessions provide opportunities for Experimental writers to build their knowledge of the organisation of a range of text forms.

Knowledge about text forms includes understanding the purpose, organisation, structure and language features of a particular form. The focus for Experimental writers includes the following.

### **Purpose**

All texts are written and read for a reason. The purpose may be to entertain or evoke thought, as in most literary texts, or to explain, describe or inquire, as in some informational texts. Understanding the purpose of a writing event will assist students to make decisions about text organisation, structure and language.

Students need to be exposed to a range of texts written for a variety of purposes. Experimental writers should be encouraged to create texts for a range of purposes. For a list of forms related to purposes, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 1.

### **Text Organisation**

Text organisation refers to the way a text is organised — the layout. Experimental writers will benefit from understanding text-form frameworks; for example, an email may include a subject line, a message and a closing greeting.

Experimental writers can be introduced to the function, terminology and use of a range of organisational features such as:

- headings;
- captions;
- diagrams and other visual aids (photographs, graphs, tables, cross-sections);
- bold or italicised words.

They can be encouraged to begin experimenting with the use of simple organisational features in their own texts. For a list of further organisational features in different texts, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 1.

For further information about the Conventions aspect, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn:

- Chapter 3: Conventions
- Chapter 1: Use of Texts.

# Involving Students

## 1 Word Walls

A Word Wall is a designated space in the classroom devoted to displaying words. As words are discovered, introduced and discussed, Word Walls are jointly constructed with the students; words can be sorted according to the current teaching focus. For Experimental writers, students' names can provide a springboard for analysing many other words.

- Jointly create the Word Wall. Begin by displaying enlarged letters of the alphabet (both upper and lower case).
- Add students' names one at a time, pointing out distinctive features, e.g. letter patterns, number of syllables.
- Add other words as they are discovered or introduced, e.g. high-frequency words, days of the week.
- Jointly work with students to sort words in various ways, e.g. by beginning sounds, letter patterns.
- Read, refer to and use the words on the Word Wall during daily print walks, when modelling, and during all writing activities.
- Encourage students to use the Word Wall as a resource when they are writing.

# Our Word Wall

Dd	Ee	Ff
David	Evelyn	friend
Denise	egg	Fremantle
dog		

Figure 5.8

## 2 Word-Sorting Activities

Word-sorting activities develop students' ability to identify and categorise words according to selected criteria. These activities provide an excellent opportunity for Experimental writers to interact with words and letter combinations in a problem-solving context. Word-sorting activities can be used to develop vocabulary, phonological awareness, graphophonic understandings, spelling generalisations and parts of speech.



Word-sorting activities can be organised in a range of ways.

- *Closed sorts* use criteria chosen by the teacher.
- *Open sorts* require the students to choose the criteria.
- *Guess my sort* involves an individual, a group or the teacher sorting the words and another group deducing the criteria.

Word-sorting activities can be completed using individual word cards provided in envelopes, words on overhead transparencies and an overhead projector, sentence makers and word cards, or even participation in physical sorting activities that require students to move around the room holding word cards.

Experimental writers can be involved in a range of Word Sorting Activities.

- *Beginning/final-letter sorts* focus attention on beginning or final letters, e.g. words that begin/end with the letter 'n'.
- *Number-of-letters sorts* focus attention on the length of words.
- *Sounds sorts* focus attention on the different sounds a single letter can represent, e.g. sorting 'g' words by the sounds it represents.
- *Letter-patterns sorts* focus attention on words that have or don't have a particular letter pattern, e.g. sorting into words that have 'ea' and those that don't.
- *Number-of-syllables sorts* focus attention on the number of syllables in a word, e.g. words with one or two syllables.
- *Spelling-generalisations sorts* focus attention on specific aspects of spelling, e.g. plurals, contractions, compound words.

Physical word sorting involves students moving around the classroom holding a word card.

- Provide each student with a word on a large card.
- Instruct them to move around the room looking for other students' words that would match theirs in some way. Students with matching words form a group.
- At the conclusion of the whole-class sort, ask students to stay in the groups they formed. Each group is then asked to hold up their cards and either explain why they are together or ask other class members to guess the sorting criterion.

### 3 Magic Words

Magic Words (Hoyt 2000) is an activity that provides an opportunity for students to identify high-frequency words or to focus on parts of words — for example, beginning letters, or suffixes such as 's' and 'es'. The use of a familiar text projected onto a wall with an overhead or data projector is the context for Magic Words. Students

use a piece of card and a ‘little magic’ to isolate selected letters or words from a whole text.

- Read and re-read a text with the whole class.
- Select a piece of the text to be copied so it can be projected onto a wall or screen.
- Select a criterion for the magic words, e.g. ‘I am looking for a word starting with st’.
- Demonstrate how to ‘lift’ words from the screen by using a piece of white card. Place the card on the selected word, ensuring it fits the word. Slowly move the card away from the screen, isolating the selected word. As if by magic, the word is now ‘floating’ on the white card.
- Have students examine the magic word to decide if it fits the criterion.
- Allow them time to take turns lifting words with the identified criteria. They could find:
  - words in which a letter represents different sounds;
  - words that start or finish with a particular letter;
  - words that have a particular onset, rime or number of syllables;
  - punctuation marks.

### 4 Sound Hunter

Refer to Chapter 4: Role Play Writing phase, p. 76.

### 5 Secret Messages

Secret Messages is an activity that provides students with the opportunity to decode messages. The messages can be created with a focus on graphophonic understandings, vocabulary, and high-frequency words that are being introduced at the time.

Experimental writers will find it easier to decipher messages that use a combination of words and pictures. The type of clues provided in one message may vary; however, it is appropriate to limit the variation when students are first working with Secret Messages. The types of clues used might include:

- removing a consonant from the beginning or end of a word, e.g. take ‘h’ from ‘hat’;
- replacing a consonant at the beginning or end of a word, e.g. take ‘b’ from ‘bake’, add ‘t’ in its place;
- removing a consonant or consonant cluster from a word and blending a new one in its place, e.g. take ‘mp’ from ‘lamp’, add ‘st’;
- finding a small word within a word, e.g. find a three-letter word in ‘hand’;



- joining two words to form a compound word, e.g. add 'shine' to 'sun';
- using an alphabet sequence for short words, e.g. the letter before 'b'.

Modelling the process and collaboratively solving secret messages is critical at this phase.

- Think of a simple sentence or message, e.g. Take out your book.
- Write a series of clues that will enable students to decode the message.
- Ensure students have access to a copy of the alphabet.
- Work with them to jointly decipher the message.
- Keep a copy of all activities to build a permanent collection for future use.

**Secret Message**

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1	Take 'm' from 'make' and add 't.'	(take)
2	Take 'sh' from 'shout'.	(out)
3	Take 'f' from four and add 'y'.	(your)
4	Sounds like look but starts with 'b'.	(book)

**Figure 5.9**

## 6 Elkonin Boxes

Refer to Chapter 4: Role Play Writing phase, p. 75.

## 7 Alphabet Books

Creating class alphabet books allows Experimental writers to develop new vocabulary and make connections between letter names and their regular sounds. Alphabet books can be used as a resource when students are writing.

- Display, share and read aloud several alphabet books.
- Discuss what information is included — e.g. the letter name, an illustration, a word beginning with the letter — and how the information is laid out.
- Explain that the class will jointly construct an alphabet book, using the school as a theme.
- For each letter of the alphabet, have students brainstorm names of people, places and events related to the school.
- With the class, decide the format of the alphabet book and the word that will be used for each letter.

### Experimental Writing Phase

- Have each student choose a partner and a letter to work with. Provide time for each pair to create their page on the computer. Assist them to create a sentence using the word.
- Print off the completed pages and compile them into a class book or wall display.

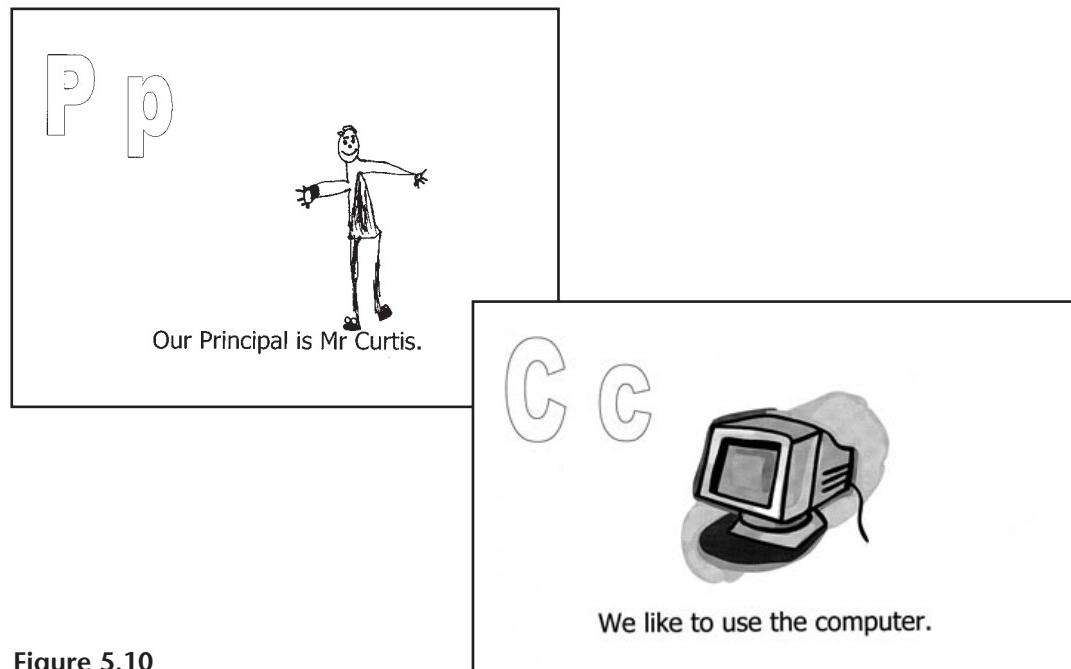
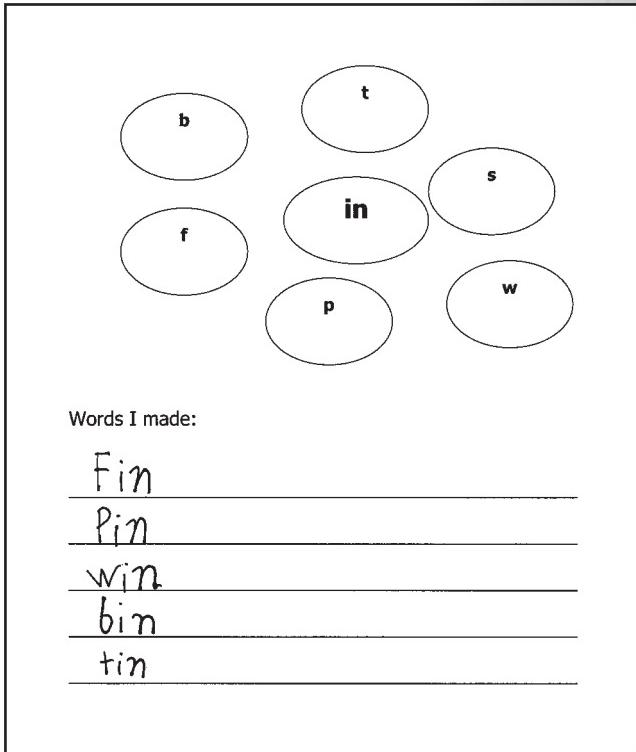
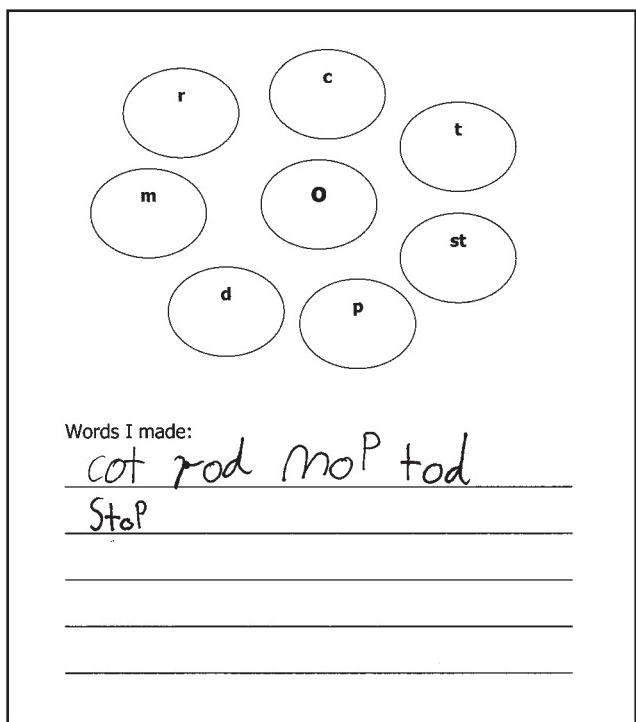


Figure 5.10

## 8 Exploring Words

Exploring Words is an open-ended activity that provides students with the opportunity to work at their own level to create words. This will help students build their knowledge of spelling generalisations and letter combinations.

- Provide students with a central focus letter or letters, e.g. 'o', 'in'
- Also provide a selection of letters and letter combinations that could be added to the central focus letter/s to create words.
- Provide guidelines about the creation of words, e.g. a letter can only be used once in a word, letters can be added to the beginning and/or end of the central focus letter/s.
- Challenge students to combine the central focus letter/s with the other letters to create as many words as possible in a given time.
- Provide time to share words and to reflect upon common patterns in the list of words.
- During writing sessions, encourage students to use the words they have created.

**Figure 5.11**

## 9 Sentence Reconstruction

Involving Experimental writers in activities where they reconstruct sentences helps to develop their understanding of a sentence as a unit of meaning. A commercial or self-made sentence maker and the cut-and-paste function on the word processor are invaluable tools for this activity.

- Write a simple sentence (or sentences) on a sentence strip or whiteboard, e.g. **Ross went to see a movie. He got very scared.**
- Read the sentence/s together with the students.
- Print each word, phrase or sentence on a separate piece of card and make punctuation cards.
- Ask some students to use the cards to reconstruct the sentences. Discuss the order of the words and the use of punctuation.
- Have the rest of the students read the sentence to check that it is in the correct order.
- Consider alternative reconstructions.
- Leave the individual cards and the sentence strip in an accessible place for students to reconstruct at other times.

## **10 Yesterday and Today**

Students will benefit from activities in which they see and hear sentences transformed from present tense to past tense, or vice versa. Students can be challenged to transform sentences in a range of ways using a simple yesterday/today framework.

- Provide students with a simple sentence, e.g. I am walking to the beach.
- Challenge them to change the sentence to past tense, e.g. Yesterday I walked to the beach.
- Discuss words that changed, e.g. 'walking' to 'walked', and their function in each sentence.

## **11 Sentence Expansion**

Sentence-expansion activities help students to learn how to add words and details to existing sentences.

- Write a simple on a sentence strip, e.g. Ross went to see a movie.
- Read the sentence together.
- Cut the strip into separate words, including a punctuation card, and place them in a sentence maker.
- To elicit further detail, ask students specific questions related to the sentence, e.g. When did Ross see the movie?
- Write words in the new information on separate cards.
- Show students how the additional information can be added to make a more detailed sentence.



**Figure 5.12**



## 12 Chain Writing

Chain Writing is the name given to the gradual expansion of a sentence. Chain Writing helps to develop writers' understanding of a sentence as a unit of meaning and to enrich their vocabulary.

- Select a word related to a topic that the class is working on, e.g. frogs.
- Have students suggest words that describe frogs. Record these words.

slimy	green	horrible
	FROGS	
slippery		

- Ask students what frogs do, and create a list of the suggestions.

slimy	green	horrible
	FROGS	
croak	jump	swim
		leap

- Encourage students to combine any of the words to create a sentence. Read their sentences together.

**Slimy frogs jump.**

**Slippery frogs croak.**

- Ask students where frogs do these things, and create a new list.

Slimy	Green	Horrible
	FROGS	
croak	jump	swim
		leap
		in the river.
		outside my bedroom window.
		under the bushes.
		on the patio.

- Have students orally combine words and phrases to create different sentences and share their sentences with the class.
- Encourage each student to write a favourite sentence, selecting from the brainstormed words and phrases.

The sentences can be illustrated and combined into a class book about frogs.

### *Extension*

To continue the sentence expansion, ask other questions, such as:

- When do frogs do these things?
- Why do frogs do these things?

## 13 Physical Sentence Construction

Physical sentence construction is an extension of Chain Writing.

Brainstormed words are written on individual cards and are used to

## **Experimental Writing Phase**

physically create new sentences. Each student becomes responsible for one word, and they work together to arrange themselves into a sentence that makes sense.

- Select a sentence that relates to a current topic or theme, or one from a previous Chain Writing activity.
- Write each word of the sentence on a separate card. Remember to include a punctuation card.
- Distribute the cards to individual students.
- Invite these students to physically arrange themselves as a sentence.
- Have the remaining students read the sentence and decide if it is complete, and ordered correctly. Discuss the need for a capital letter to begin the sentence. (This can be added as a stick-on note or the word can be written on both sides of the card using upper and lower case beginning letters.)

### *Extensions*

- Have students suggest other words that could be added to the sentence, e.g. **adjectives**, **adverbs**. Write their suggestions on stick-on notes and invite a student to put them in the sentence in the appropriate places. Invite the class to read the new sentence to ensure it still makes sense.
- Provide opportunities for those students who have the cards to rearrange themselves and make another sentence. Read the new sentence as a whole class to ensure it still makes sense.

## **14 Sentence Frames**



Sentence Frames can be used with Experimental writers to analyse and develop an understanding of simple sentence structures. They can also be used to introduce and teach commonly used parts of speech.

- Introduce students to a simple sentence structure. Any of the following would be appropriate for Experimental writers.
  - I like \_\_\_\_\_.
  - I see a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - I can \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Look at the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ are big.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ are small.
  - A \_\_\_\_\_ is red/yellow/blue.
  - \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ who do you see? I see \_\_\_\_\_ looking at me.



- Create a series of sentences using the selected structure. Place these in a sentence maker.
- Brainstorm words to complete the repetitive sentences and record students' suggestions, e.g. I like apples, I like flowers, I like swimming.
- Read the sentences with the students.
- Provide students with a booklet containing the same sentence structure and invite individuals to complete the sentences by filling in the blanks. Students can illustrate their sentences.

## 15 Punctuation Effects

Punctuation Effects provides students with an opportunity to practise the use of various punctuation marks and note how these affect the meaning of sentences. It is important for students to develop an understanding of the use of punctuation, as it can alter the meaning of simply constructed sentences.

- Create cards showing punctuation marks and known sight words, including students' names.
- Jointly create simple sentences.
- Jointly add different punctuation marks to the sentences. Have students read the sentences and discuss the effect of the punctuation marks on the meaning.

Tania	can	swim	.
Can	Tania	swim	?
Tania	can	swim	!

Figure 5.13

## 16 Generic Games

Refer to Chapter 4: Role Play Writing Phase, pp. 80–83.

# PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. word order, text organisation.
- Continue to teach strategies used throughout the writing process, e.g. self-questioning.
- Continue to teach spelling strategies, e.g. chunking.
- Model simple ways to plan for writing, e.g. talking, drawing.
- Model simple ways to proofread and edit, e.g. adding words or punctuation.
- Continue to model simple publishing alternatives, highlighting purpose.
- Model how to find, record and organise information from texts, e.g. alphabetical order, simple retrieval chart.
- Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.

## Organisation of the Processes and Strategies Aspect

There are several differences in the organisation of the Processes and Strategies aspect. Both the Teaching Notes and the Teaching and Learning Experiences (Involving Students) are in the *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

The rationale for these differences is that the processes and strategies of spelling and writing are not conceptually hierarchical and therefore not phase-specific. In all phases, a variety of writing processes and strategies need to be introduced, developed and consolidated.

What varies from one phase to the next is the growth in:

- the number and integration of strategies used throughout the processes of writing;
- the awareness and monitoring of writing processes;
- the efficiency in use of the processes of writing;
- the ability to articulate the use of the strategies used in the processes of writing;
- the awareness of how the use of processes helps with composing texts.



# Supporting Parents of Experimental Writers

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF EXPERIMENTAL WRITERS

Experimental writers know that speech can be written down; however, they may not always read their writing the same way every time. They have-a-go at writing texts they are familiar with, such as letters, recipes and lists. These writers may represent words using one, two or three letters, as in 'PRT – party'. Experimental writers know that there is a purpose for writing and can identify their audience, as in 'I am writing a letter to granny to say thank you for . . .'.

## Supporting Experimental Writers in the Home

Experimental writers will benefit from a range of experiences in the home setting. Ideas for providing appropriate experiences are available on Parent Cards located on the *First Steps Writing CD-ROM*. Teachers can select appropriate cards for each Experimental writer and copy them for parents to use at home.

### Parent Cards

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>1</b> General Description and How to Support Experimental Writers<br><b>2</b> Encouraging Writing<br><b>3</b> Writing with Your Child<br><b>4</b> Writing and Reading Links<br><b>5</b> Developing Writing through Play<br><b>6</b> Developing Understandings about Letters, Words and Sentences | <b>7</b> Developing Understandings about Different Types of Writing<br><b>8</b> Developing Vocabulary<br><b>9</b> Supporting Spelling<br><b>10</b> Building Spelling Knowledge through Games |
|---|--|



Also available on the Writing CD-ROM is a parent-friendly version of the Writing Map of Development.

## CHAPTER 6

# Early Writing Phase

The image shows five separate writing samples arranged in a grid-like fashion, each enclosed in a light gray box.

- Sample 1:** A handwritten note about seahorses. It includes several sentences and some crossed-out or corrected text. The handwriting is cursive and somewhat稚嫩 (childlike).
- Sample 2:** Another handwritten note about seahorses, similar in style to Sample 1, with some corrections and a small note at the bottom.
- Sample 3:** A handwritten note addressed to Brandon. It discusses living in Fall Autumn, visiting Disneyland, having a SUPER name, brown hair, and French fries.
- Sample 4:** A handwritten note about a dog named Rupert. It mentions going to Spokane, having a pen pal, and going to the beach at Christmas time.
- Sample 5:** A handwritten note from Shaelyn about a trip to the beach. It describes getting popcorn stolen by seagulls and a promise not to bring popcorn next time. The note ends with "so bye from Jeremy" and features a simple drawing of a smiling person.

Figure 6.1

## Global Statement

Early writers produce a small range of texts that exhibit some of the conventions of writing. Texts such as retells, reports and emails are composed to share experiences, information or feelings. Early writers have a small bank of frequently used words that they spell correctly. When writing unknown words, they choose letters on the basis of sound, without regard for conventional spelling patterns.



# Early Writing Indicators

## Use of Texts

- ◆ Attempts a small range of familiar texts, either teacher-directed or self-selected.
- ◆ With assistance, finds information in texts and records it through drawing or writing key words.
- Often writes a simple recount of personal events.
- Writes simple factual accounts with little elaboration.
- Rewrites known stories in sequence.
- May include irrelevant detail in written texts.
- Innovates on familiar sentence and text patterns.
- Chooses topics that are personally significant.
- Uses rhyme, rhythm and repetition in writing.
- Attempts to transfer knowledge of text organisation to writing, e.g. includes headings/diagrams in a report.
- Begins to show evidence of personal voice.
- Uses the metalanguage associated with writing, e.g. recount, edit, plan.

## Contextual Understanding

- ◆ Explains the purpose of a small range of familiar text forms, e.g. jokes are to entertain.
- ◆ Talks about the purpose of a piece of writing and the ideas that need to be included.
- ◆ Explains why characters or events are represented in a particular way when composing literary texts.
- ◆ Explains why people or ideas are represented in a particular way when composing informational texts.
- ◆ Imitates the use of simple devices used in texts, e.g. print size, colour.
- Attempts to orient or create a context for the reader, but may assume a shared context.
- Explains how writing enables people to communicate over time and distance.
- Initiates writing as a social practice, e.g. notes, messages.
- Recognises simple devices that authors and illustrators use to influence readers.

## Conventions

- ◆ Experiments with words drawn from a variety of sources, e.g. literature, media, oral language of peers.
- ◆ Spells and uses a small bank of known words correctly.
- ◆ Knows all letters by name, and their common sounds.
- ◆ Knows simple letter patterns and the sounds they represent, e.g. sh, ch, ee.
- ◆ Writes simple sentences using correct punctuation.
- Discusses word formations and meaning, noticing similarities and differences.
- Transfers to writing, words encountered in speaking and listening, viewing or reading.

- Is beginning to use 'book' language where appropriate, e.g. Once upon a time ....
- Links ideas using conjunctions, e.g. and, then.
- Experiments with a variety of sentence beginnings.
- Experiments with the use of dialogue.
- Attempts to use varied punctuation, e.g. exclamation marks, questions marks, commas.
- May overgeneralise the use of print conventions, e.g. overuse of apostrophes.
- Often writes in the first person.

## Processes and Strategies

- ◆ Draws upon semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge when writing, e.g. text organisation, word order.
- ◆ Uses a small range of strategies throughout the writing process, e.g. self-questioning.
- ◆ Uses a small range of strategies to spell unknown words, e.g. chunking, sounding out.
- ◆ Talks or draws as a means of planning before writing.
- ◆ Begins to proofread and edit own writing when directed, e.g. deleting words, adding punctuation.
- ◆ Creates a published text that is beginning to reflect the intended purpose.
- Chooses letters on the basis of sound without regard for conventional spelling patterns, e.g. kaj (cage), pepl (people).
- Uses self-formulated rules for spelling particular sounds.
- Sounds out and represents all substantial sounds in a word.
- Represents past tense in different ways according to the sounds heard, e.g. stopt.
- Uses some known letter patterns in words, e.g. ing, sh.
- Experiments with spelling words in different ways.
- Identifies and uses knowledge of similar-sounding words to spell.
- Shares ideas for writing with peer or teacher.
- Participates in group brainstorming activities to elicit ideas before writing.
- Identifies possible spelling errors after completing writing.
- Responds to requests for elaboration or clarification of written ideas.
- Reads back own writing to clarify meaning.
- Experiments with various ways to publish texts, e.g. word processor, audiotape, videotape.

*Note The terms 'write' and 'writing' encompass the use of traditional tools, such as pen and paper, as well as the use of electronic tools such as computers or mobile phones.*

*The term 'texts' refers to both literary and informational texts and includes visual, spoken or written texts. These may be printed, electronic, live or multimodal.*

# Major Teaching Emphases

## Environment and Attitude (see p. 135)

- Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.
- Foster students' enjoyment of writing.
- Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. planning, editing, spelling.
- Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.

## Use of Texts (see p. 140)

- Continue to expose students to a range of text forms, and discuss the features of each.
- Provide opportunities for students to compose a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with writing, and encourage its use.

## Contextual Understanding (see p. 152)

- Discuss the purpose and audience of a range of text forms.
- Continue to discuss some of the decisions writers make when composing texts, and provide opportunities for students to do the same.
- Encourage students to make choices about how to represent characters and events when composing literary texts.
- Encourage students to make choices about how to represent people and ideas when composing informational texts.
- Model and encourage the use of devices, and discuss how they influence meaning.
- Model to students how to use writing to influence change about social issues that concern them.

## Conventions (see p. 161)

- Provide opportunities for students to develop, refine and use new vocabulary.
- Continue to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. topic words, signal words.

- Build students' knowledge about words and word parts, e.g. contractions, suffixes.
- Continue to build phonological awareness and graphophonic knowledge, such as:
  - representing the same sound with different letters or letter combinations, e.g. beach, me, ski, thief
  - representing different sounds with the same letters or letter combinations, e.g. enough, though, through.
- Continue to teach the use of punctuation, e.g. commas.
- Continue to teach the parts of speech and their relationships, e.g. subject–verb agreement.
- Teach students to construct and manipulate sentences, e.g. expanding, reducing, transforming.
- Model how to group together sentences with similar information.
- Continue to build knowledge of different text forms, emphasising:
  - purpose, e.g. reports describe
  - text structure, e.g. reports list details
  - text organisation, e.g. reports use headings
  - language features, e.g. reports use present tense.

## Processes and Strategies (see p. 181)

- Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. grammatical knowledge, cultural knowledge.
- Continue to teach strategies used throughout the writing process, e.g. determining importance.
- Continue to teach spelling strategies, e.g. using visual memory.
- Teach students to plan for writing in a variety of ways, e.g. brainstorming, classifying.
- Teach students how to use proofreading and editing to refine their writing.
- Continue to model a variety of publishing alternatives, highlighting the purpose and audience.
- Teach students how to find, record and organise information from texts, e.g. note making, note taking.
- Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.



# Teaching and Learning Experiences

## ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE

### **Major Teaching Emphases**

- Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.
- Foster students' enjoyment of writing.
- Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. planning, editing, spelling.
- Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.

### Teaching Notes

A classroom community that supports and nurtures Early writers is one that promotes experimentation, problem solving and sharing to help build and refine students' knowledge about written language. It is important for Early writers to see writing as an enjoyable experience and to see themselves as successful writers. The focus for developing positive attitudes towards writing as well as a supportive environment for Early writers is organised under the following headings.

- Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment
- Fostering Enjoyment of Writing
- Encouraging Experimentation
- Writing as a Social Practice

### ***Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment***

A supportive environment is one in which both the physical aspects and the culture of the classroom are considered. A positive classroom climate is one in which students have opportunities to use and combine printed, spoken, visual and digital processes. These opportunities contribute to students' willingness and eagerness to write.

### ***Physical Environment***

Classroom print continues to provide an excellent context for Early writers to extend their knowledge about how letters, words,

sentences and texts work. Early writers benefit from opportunities to explore and interact with print in authentic, purposeful ways. A jointly constructed, print-rich environment also helps students understand that print has a range of functions, and they can begin to transfer these understandings into their own writing.

- *Labels and captions* can be jointly created for displays of work and for functional use. Ensure that labelling of classroom items is both functional and meaningful, e.g. Use this computer to publish your writing.
- *Messages* can be jointly created and sent. This reinforces to students the fact that writing has an authentic purpose and audience beyond the classroom.
- *Songs, poems and chants* can be written on charts as part of Modelled and Shared Writing sessions, and can be a source of words during independent writing.
- *Word Banks and Word Walls* can be jointly created and may include the names of students in the class, other significant people within the community, and frequently used words. These words can be used as a reference for Early writers during independent writing.
- *Charts* that are jointly constructed are a great way to record any discoveries students make. These ‘living’ charts are cumulative in that they are added to as new understandings evolve, e.g. We Found These Ways to Spell /e/ as in me. Words to Use Instead of ‘Happy’. Students can use the charts as sources of words when writing.
- A *writing centre* provides students with an opportunity to practise and consolidate their understandings about writing. Provide a variety of items for students to use, such as coloured paper, pencils, computer software packages, and picture or electronic dictionaries. Suggestions for writing or links to suitable writing websites may provide the stimulus and motivation to write. A display board located in this area can be used to display students’ completed work.
- A *word-study centre* provides a stimulus for students to develop an interest in words and promotes inquiry into how letters and words work. It can contain letter tiles and boards, pocket charts with word cards, dictionaries, a thesaurus, word games or crossword puzzles. Electronic word games from the Internet, such as Scrabble, will also encourage students to learn about words.
- A *reading corner* provides a relaxed, informal area for independent reading. A wide range of texts can be made available in the reading corner; they may include dictionaries, atlases, posters, informational texts, magazines, newspapers, comics, class-made texts, interactive CD-ROMs, lists of suitable websites, and book and tape sets.



Although it is important that the classroom displays a variety of environmental print, it is also essential that students have ownership of the print, know how to interact with it, and make use of it for different purposes.

- Model the use of charts during Modelled, Shared, Interactive and Guided Writing, e.g. ‘How do I work out this word? Look at the charts. Which one would be the best to use?’
- Provide opportunities for students to discuss literacy discoveries they are making.
- Take students on a ‘print walk’ around the class so that they have the opportunity to read and revisit charts they have contributed to. This is an opportunity to practise words they have learnt or to play games such as matching words or phrases.
- As students independently create texts, encourage them to continually make use of classroom print as a source of words and correct spelling.
- Model a range of ICT tools used when creating texts.
- Display and discuss writing created by other family members, e.g. grandmothers, elders, siblings.

### ***Classroom Culture***

As well as providing appropriate materials and a carefully planned physical environment, it is important also to consider how to create a positive classroom writing culture where students see learning to write as useful and worthwhile.

- Allocate regular periods of time for writing.
- Provide genuine purposes and audiences for writing.
- Have high expectations of all students.
- Provide opportunities for students to select, within given parameters, their own topics, ways to plan and publishing formats.
- Provide a range of ICT resources for students to use to create texts.
- Ensure students have a clear sense of what is expected.
- Allow time for students to share their writing with others.
- Value writing, and convey this attitude to students.
- Praise students’ writing.
- Display students’ writing.
- Establish, teach and reinforce procedures for solving challenges during writing, e.g. can’t spell a word.
- Provide opportunities for students to discuss and evaluate their own work.
- Incorporate purposeful writing into all learning areas.

## ***Fostering Enjoyment of Writing***

Take every opportunity to foster students' enjoyment of writing.

This can be achieved in a range of ways.

- Provide time each day for all students to use writing for real purposes.
- Read to students every day to introduce and discuss a variety of text forms
- Involve students in Modelled, Shared, Interactive and Guided Writing sessions on a regular basis.
- Provide opportunities for students to use a range of ICT resources to combine print, images and sounds, e.g. computers, software programs, interactive whiteboards, digital cameras.
- Provide opportunities for students to share and discuss their writing with peers and other significant people.
- Encourage family members to respond to their child's writing.
- Allow time for students to provide feedback to peers, e.g. Author's Chair.
- Ensure there is a wide selection of publishing options readily available for students to choose from, e.g. access to the computer, poster paper.
- Provide ongoing, targeted feedback and encouragement.
- Create a comfortable physical environment that promotes independent writing.
- Provide multiple demonstrations of the strategies effective writers use.
- Allow students to share their completed writing in a variety of contexts, e.g. read at assembly, display on the noticeboard, post on a website.
- Create well-organised, consistent routines for writing about learning experiences.
- Organise visits by authors to speak about their writing and how they went about the writing process.
- Encourage and organise visits to school and local libraries so that students are exposed to a wide variety of text forms.
- Make available texts that have been created during Modelled, Shared and Interactive Writing sessions.
- Provide opportunities for students to practise writing using computer software, WebQuests, or websites, e.g. [www.giggle.poetry.com](http://www.giggle.poetry.com)

## ***Encouraging Experimentation***

It is important for Early writers to feel confident to 'have-a-go' at using written language across a range of contexts. They should be



encouraged to reflect on ways to improve in selected focus areas and to experiment with all aspects of writing.

This can be done by inviting students to:

- use a variety of strategies when writing;
- have-a-go at writing a variety of texts for real purposes;
- choose their own topics;
- use a variety of spelling strategies when attempting unknown words;
- extend their vocabulary by solving word puzzles, completing crosswords, playing word games;
- offer opinions about texts read, heard or written;
- discuss their writing and the discoveries they have made;
- experiment with technology to create multimodal texts;
- experiment with colour, font size, style, animation and special effects when using presentation software packages.

### ***Writing as a Social Practice***

The focus when teaching writing in the classroom is to provide many real-world situations that require the use of written language. The ultimate goal is for students to function in society as literate individuals who can use writing to communicate their ideas, share information, stimulate thinking, formulate questions and influence policy and action.

Early writers need to develop the understanding that writing is a tool that is used to get things done and can also evoke a response from other people; for example, a note asking the school cleaner to repair a broken chair, or invitations to friends to come to a party. Provide opportunities for Early writers to share and discuss examples where writing has been used in this way.

For further information about Environment and Attitude, see *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning*, Chapter 5: Establishing a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment.

# USE OF TEXTS

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Continue to expose students to a range of text forms, and discuss the features of each.
- Provide opportunities for students to compose a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with writing, and encourage its use.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for supporting Early writers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.

- Exposure to a Range of Text Forms
- Opportunities to Create a Range of Texts
- Crafting Personal Voice and Individual Style
- Developing Metalanguage

### ***Exposure to a Range of Text Forms***

Early writers will benefit from ongoing opportunities to discuss and interact with a variety of literary and informational texts; these texts can be made available for students to independently read and discuss. Texts should be selected from all areas of the curriculum, and also should reflect texts used in the community. They could be multimodal, class-made or published materials presented in a range of formats such as books, websites, emails, faxes, CD-ROMs or software programs.

During Modelled, Shared and Interactive Writing sessions, show students how successful writers create a range of text forms for different purposes. These could include the creation of texts used to:

- entertain, e.g. poems, jokes, cartoons;
- recount, e.g. journals, retells;
- describe, e.g. contents pages, simple reports, labels;
- socialise, e.g. SMS messages, emails, invitations;
- explain, e.g. classroom rules, tables;
- instruct, e.g. directions, road signs, rules;



- inquire, e.g. interview questions;
- persuade, e.g. brochures, catalogues.

## **Opportunities to Create a Range of Texts**

Early writers continue to benefit from an environment that provides opportunities to create a range of texts in meaningful situations and for real purposes. Students can be supported in working independently and encouraged to tackle new challenges.

Modelled, Shared and Interactive Writing sessions provide opportunities to demonstrate both the processes and the products of writing. Students will benefit from seeing how different texts are planned and constructed; with teachers, they can continue to jointly construct a range of texts. Many aspects of writing can be demonstrated and discussed, including any of the following.

- Selecting different text forms for different purposes and audiences.
- Identifying the audience.
- Choosing a topic.
- Selecting information to be included in the text or in each paragraph.
- Choosing appropriate language.
- Organising the information.
- Making use of headings, subheadings, diagrams and graphs.
- Planning, proofreading, editing and publishing writing.

Guided Writing, Independent Writing and writing in other curriculum areas provide opportunities for Early writers to practise applying text forms that have been taught. Students also need opportunities for personal-choice writing. During this time they may choose to practise recently learnt text forms and to write as a means of self-expression.

Understandings about writing are closely linked to understandings about reading. Early writers will continue to learn much about written language through varied reading experiences; familiarise them with different text forms during Modelled, Shared and Guided Reading sessions. Collecting, reading, displaying and analysing samples of different forms of text will help prepare students to confidently create a variety of texts.

## **Crafting Personal Voice and Individual Style**

Many things — including a writer's purpose, world view, multiple identity and culture — influence voice within text. Voice in writing is defined in numerous ways.

'Writing words that will make readers listen and be affected.'  
(Tony Romano 2004)

'Voice is the imprint of ourselves on our writing.'  
(Don Graves 1994)

'Voice in writing has to do with a unique personality-on-paper.'  
(Ralph Fletcher 1993)

At this phase it is important to help students understand the concept of voice and to encourage them to use it in their writing. This can be done in a range of ways.

- Show and discuss examples of sentences, passages or entire texts that demonstrate voice.
- Share samples of students' writing that have a strong sense of voice.
- Compare the voice in written passages. Discuss how they differ.
- Discuss how the author's voice keeps the reader interested.
- Read several books by one author and identify the voice, e.g. the style and word choice.
- Model how voice can be created in writing, e.g. adding personal thoughts or feelings, using surprise or humour.
- Model how particular words and phrases can be changed to add voice.
- Have students return to journal entries and identify examples where their voice is strong.
- Provide opportunities for students to write about topics that are personally important.

### ***Developing Metalanguage***

Students need to be supported in building a vocabulary that they can use to discuss and describe language, their own writing and the writing process. The vocabulary used to talk about language is known as metalanguage, and when students are able to use it to talk competently about their own writing and learning, it helps them to understand how language operates. Developing metalanguage also helps students to understand the support and feedback provided by teachers.

To help Early writers continue to expand and use terms associated with writing and written language it is important to use metalanguage as part of everyday teaching. This can be done across learning areas, as part of targeted discussions, during explicit demonstrations, during one-on-one conversations with students, or as part of planned Modelled, Shared, Interactive or Guided Writing sessions.



Certain terms tend to be more prominent when focusing on different aspects of writing; for example, when working with Early writers, consider the use of the following terms.

- Use of Texts: index, glossary, explanation.
- Contextual Understanding: purpose, audience, fact, opinion, device, perspective.
- Conventions: antonym, compound word, punctuation, signal words, structure.
- Processes and Strategies: editing, proofreading, mnemonic, plan, refine.

For further information about the Use of Texts aspect, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn:

- Chapter 1: Use of Texts
- Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

## Involving Students

### 1 Promoting Independent Writing

Early writers benefit from many opportunities to write for authentic purposes and audiences. Meaningful writing contexts that encourage Early writers to independently create texts include any of the following.

- Writing reminder notes and messages for themselves, their parents or the class, e.g. inviting a community member to school open day, a reminder note to bring a library book.
- Creating labels for displays, e.g. Look at Our Clever Art Work.
- Keeping a diary or reflective journal.
- Writing a postcard about a school event.
- Writing emails to each other and other classes via the school intranet.
- Creating signs for the classroom.
- Creating captions and text about digital photographs taken during a class excursion.
- Writing a monthly newsletter for parents.
- Creating speeches for school or class assemblies.
- Contributing to the school newsletter.
- Writing book reviews for a local bookstore.

### 2 Writingo



Writingo is a writing-incentive scheme that encourages students to create a variety of text forms. A grid, kept in a Writing Journal, sets out a number of examples of different forms; as a student writes an

## Early Writing Phase

example of a particular form it is marked off on the grid. An incentive of some kind may be provided once students have completed a Writingo path, which may run up, down or diagonally, e.g. three across.

The grid lists the particular text forms to be written, but not necessarily the topics. Providing extra space in the squares for titles and dates allows each student to personalise the grid and record personal writing achievements.

To complete the activity, students:

- select a listed text form from the grid;
- complete the writing of the chosen text form;
- take the written piece to a writing conference;
- reflect on the construction of the piece;
- ask the conference partner to initial the Writingo grid;
- record the title and date in the appropriate square of the grid;
- choose another text form from the grid to continue on the path up, down or diagonally.

A recipe	A book review	An invitation
Title: _____ Date: _____	Title: _____ Date: _____	Title: _____ Date: _____
A set of instructions	An email	A newspaper report
Title: _____ Date: _____	Title: _____ Date: _____	Title: _____ Date: _____
A poem	A cartoon	An advertisement
Title: _____ Date: _____	Title: _____ Date: _____	Title: _____ Date: _____

Figure 6.2

## 3 Six-Line Poetry

This activity requires students to research a topic, such as an animal, then write a six-line poem around it. Students search the web or consult books to locate key words and phrases related to the selected topic — in this case, what the animal looks like, how it moves, what it eats, what it does. Six-Line Poetry provides a context for Early writers to experience success and develop confidence in creating poems.



Before students independently create poems, it is important to model how to combine the selected key words and phrases.

- Provide opportunities for students to collect information on a selected topic.
- Allow time for them to list key words and phrases on the topic.
- Model how to order and reorder the selected key words and phrases to create an interesting poem.
- Allow time for students to create a six-line poem.
- Encourage them to share with others.
- Invite them to illustrate their poems and create a class book.



**Figure 6.3**

#### 4 Contact an Author

Contact an Author provides opportunities for students to create messages to be sent to authors. These could include comments on new titles, questions about favourite characters, recommendations, or thank-you notes. Many authors' websites have live chat rooms, a guest book or bulletin boards; some may even reply to individual emails.

- Support students to plan what they would say to an author in an email, chat room or guest book.
- Have them visit the website of their favourite author to create and send a message.
- Provide opportunities for them to print out a copy of the message sent and share any responses from the author.

## Early Writing Phase

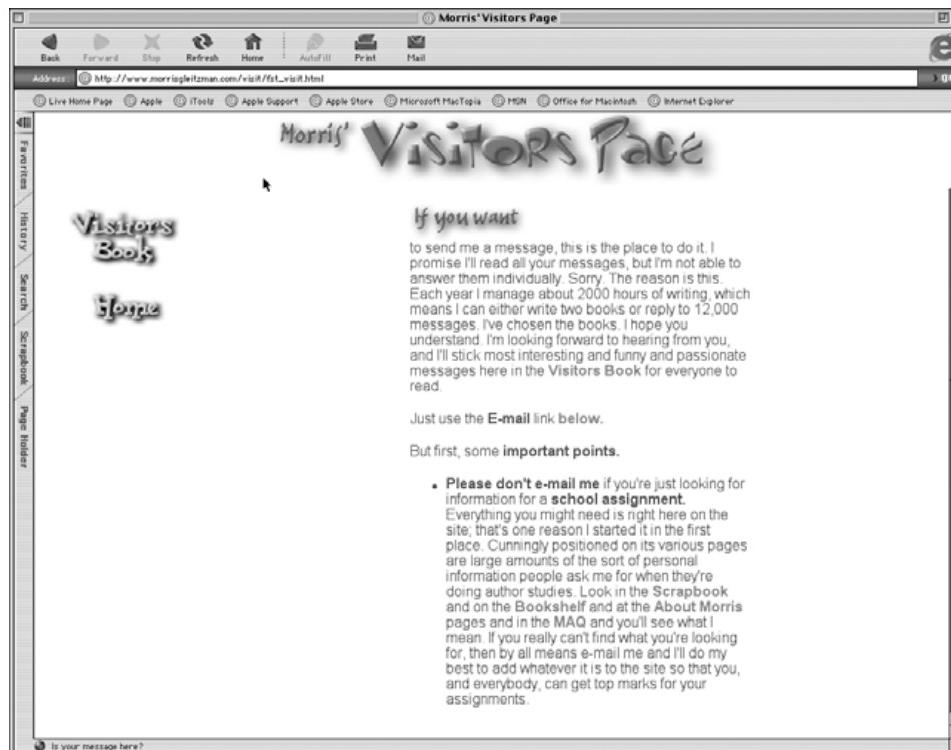


Figure 6.4

## 5 Explorer's Circle



Explorer's Circle is an ideal activity to use to continue to expose students to a range of text forms. Students are asked to explore the layout, features and language of given text forms. Explorer's Circle requires a selection of texts of a particular form.

- Provide small groups with a selection of texts of a particular form, e.g. shopping catalogues.
- Allow time for students to discuss the features, layout and type of language used in this form.
- Have them record their findings in the provided format.
- Encourage them to report their findings to the class.
- Jointly construct a class chart of the findings and display it with the text samples.

As an extension, ask students to create a piece of writing using their findings.

## 6 Text Diagrams

Text Diagrams is an activity that exposes students to the organisation of a range of text forms. A variety of text structures (using crosses to represent words) should be created and displayed for students, who are then challenged to identify the forms represented in the diagrams.



First Steps: Second Edition  
Name: Room 3 Date:

### Explorer's Circle

Text Form Explored: Catalogues

Layout and Features	Language Used
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pictures and prices.</li> <li>• groups foods together such as groceries, meat, dairy, bakery</li> <li>• name of supermarket</li> <li>• opening times</li> <li>• locations of supermarket</li> <li>• organised in rows.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red Hot Specials</li> <li>• everyday low prices</li> <li>• managers special</li> <li>• limited time only</li> <li>• while stocks last</li> <li>• double points</li> </ul>

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MA006\_CATALOGUE\_C2\_ASSESSMENT.docx

Figure 6.5

- Using an overhead projector, display a variety of text-structure diagrams.
- Challenge students to identify the structure that would represent a particular form, e.g. a letter, a menu. Ensure that students justify their choices.
- Arrange students in small groups and have them identify which forms of text the other diagrams represent.
- Provide each group with a different piece of text, e.g. a newspaper article, an advertisement, a menu. Have them use an overhead transparency to create their own diagram based on the structure of their text.
- Have them share their diagram with the class, and allow time for others to identify the form represented.
- Create a display of diagrams and texts.

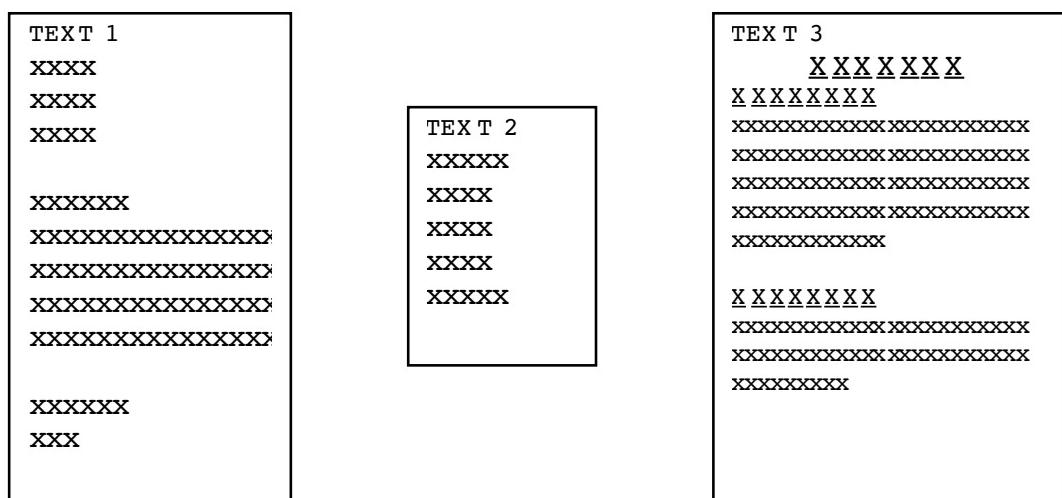


Figure 6.6 Diagrams illustrating possible text structures

## **7 Retelling from the Heart**

Retelling from the Heart (Hoyt 1999) is an activity that encourages students to explore and create a personal anecdote. It requires them to write about a personal event by visualising and using all of their senses to make the story rich in detail. Writing about topics that are personally significant assists students to develop a sense of ‘personal voice’.

- Ask students to reflect on and record three special memories or events in the past.
- Allow time for each student to share these events with a peer.
- Ask students to identify the events they wish to write about.
- Ask them a series of questions that will help trigger the details of the memory, e.g. ‘As you imagine yourself there, what do you see, hear, smell, think, feel?’
- Have them record words or phrases as the questions are asked.
- Invite students to use the recorded words and phrases to write about the experience. Some students’ writing may evolve into poetry.
- Provide students with the opportunity to share their writing.

I rember when my dog died. My family was standing around hugging in the Kitchen everyone was crying. The dog Basket was in the corner empty. There was no sound of Snowy making funny noses but I could still smell his food and his doggy smell. I felt very sad.

Figure 6.7

## **8 Read and Retell**

Refer to Chapter 5: Experimental Writing Phase, p 97.

## **9 Guess the Author**

Guess the Author exposes students to chosen authors with the intent of investigating their particular voices. A selection of texts by several authors is needed to complete this activity. Students are required to listen to readings of a selected text and determine which author the lines belong to, e.g. Are these the words of Paul Jennings or Roald Dahl?



Over a period of time, read a selection of texts by the same author to the class. After each reading, discuss the author's writing style and voice.

- Select several sentences from a text written by one of the selected authors. It need not be a text the students have heard before.
- Read the selected sentences to the students and have them identify the author.
- Encourage them to discuss their reasons for suggesting that author.
- Repeat the process with a different author. Make comparisons between the two.
- With the class, create a chart identifying the individual style and voice of each chosen author.

## 10 My Authority List

Portalupi and Fletcher (2004) suggest that having students create their own personal authority lists not only helps them to find topics to write about, but also helps them to write with real voice because they have interest in the topics.

- Model the creation of an authority list. Consider any life experiences that could be a stimulus for future writing. Consider the following questions.
  - Where do you come in the family?
  - Where did you grow up?
  - What pets have you had?
  - What are you good at?
  - What are your interests?
  - What sports do you play?
  - What are some things you know how to do?
- Allow time for students to begin creating personal authority lists.
- Have them share with a friend, and add to their lists.
- Encourage them to add to the lists on an ongoing basis.
- Have them refer to their lists when looking for ideas to write about.

As a variation, provide students with a 'feeling' word and have them explore their personal experiences with that feeling. This helps to generate specific information that can be incorporated into writing.

### Feeling Scared

- What did you do?
- What did you say?
- What thoughts went through your head?
- What would other people have noticed about you?

## 11 Email Exchange

Email Exchange is an activity that involves students in writing electronic book reviews to be placed in a common folder that is accessible to other students in the school. Alternatively, the book reviews can be emailed directly to other students. Becoming involved in Email Exchange encourages students to write for a real audience.

- Discuss the essential elements of a book review.
- Collaboratively create a template for writing book reviews on the class computer.
- Model the creation of a book review and demonstrate how to post the review on the school server.
- Encourage students to use the electronic template to write reviews after reading a text.
- Encourage them to email their book reviews to a friend.
- Work with another class to exchange reviews on a regular basis.
- Assist students to find the books they have reviewed in the library.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the title bar 'CCLC - Send a Book Review!'. The address bar contains the URL 'http://www.cclc.vic.gov.au/submitbookreview'. The page content is a form titled 'Submit Your Book Review' with the following fields:

- 'Send us your own book review and we will publish it on our website!'
- 'Your first name:' followed by an input field.
- 'Your age:' followed by an input field.
- 'Title of book:' followed by an input field.
- 'Author:' followed by an input field.
- 'What happens in the story?' followed by a large text area.
- 'What type of story was it?' followed by a list of radio buttons:
  - Animal
  - Spooky
  - Adventure
  - Funny
  - Magic
  - another category: [input field]
- 'How good was it?' followed by a list of radio buttons:
  - Yuk!
  - OK
  - Ripper!

A 'Send your book review now!' button is at the bottom right of the form area.

**Figure 6.8 A suggested review framework**



## 12 E-Pals

E-Pals is an activity equivalent to penpals; however, in this case students communicate with other students around the world via the Internet. E-Pals can be set up either for individual students or for a whole class that is interested in working with another class on a collaborative project. This activity is motivating for students, as they write for a real audience and purpose.

- Determine the students' interest in communicating with peers in the state or country, or overseas.
- Find an on-line site that assists in finding suitable e-pals, e.g. <http://www.epals.com/> or <http://www.ks-connection.org>. Ensure that whatever site is chosen meets the guidelines for school use.
- Register your interest in finding e-pals on the chosen site.
- Choose appropriate e-pals from the list of responses.
- Discuss email etiquette with students, and create a class chart.
- Discuss information to include in first and subsequent emails.
- Encourage students to communicate regularly.

Students may take part in email interviews. For example, if a class wanted to find out about their e-pals' school and area, they could design an interview form to attach to the email.

# CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Discuss the purpose and audience of a range of text forms.
- Continue to discuss some of the decisions writers make when composing texts, and provide opportunities for students to do the same.
- Encourage students to make choices about how to represent characters and events when composing literary texts.
- Encourage students to make choices about how to represent people and ideas when composing informational texts.
- Model and encourage the use of devices, and discuss how they influence meaning.
- Model to students how to use writing to influence change about social issues that concern them.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for helping Early writers to develop contextual understanding in writing is organised under the following headings.

- Understandings about Purpose and Audience
- Exploring Decisions Writers Make
- Representing Characters and Events in Literary Texts
- Representing People and Ideas in Informational Texts
- Use of Devices
- Writing to Influence Social Issues

### ***Understandings About Purpose and Audience***

Early writers need to extend their awareness that all texts are written for a purpose and that writing serves many functions. Identifying texts according to their primary purpose enables students to take into account associated contextual understandings. This resource categorises texts according to eight purposes, and writers usually employ certain forms of text to meet these purposes.

- To entertain
- To recount
- To socialise
- To inquire
- To describe
- To persuade



- To explain
- To instruct

As students read a variety of texts, encourage them to discuss their purpose and why they have been written in a particular way. This will help students understand that when they want to write they can choose the text form that would be the most suitable to achieve their purpose — for example, ‘If I want to tell you facts about frogs, I’ll write a report’.

Early writers are beginning to develop an awareness that an audience has certain needs and expectations. Students need support to incorporate this knowledge in their writing and to make adjustments where necessary. Early writers still need to write for specific, known audiences, but may also begin to write for general audiences; possible audiences could include themselves, family, friends, class members, teachers, other students, e-pals or community members.

## ***Exploring Decisions Writers Make***

The focus in this phase is helping students understand that when creating texts, authors make decisions about purpose, audience, form and content. Constantly encouraging students to question authors’ choices helps them to develop the foundations of critical literacy. Shared, Interactive and Guided Writing sessions provide opportunities to demonstrate the types of questions authors ask themselves, and how they make choices about these questions. Students can then be encouraged to consider these questions when creating their own texts and to discuss how the choices they make may impact on their readers.

### *Purpose and audience*

- Why am I writing this text?
- Who is the particular audience for this piece of writing?
- What do I know about the audience (age, gender, interests)?
- What does the audience want or need to know about this topic?
- What will the audience/reader expect to see in this text?

### *Form and organisation*

- What text form should I use?
- How will I set the text out?
- Will the text need headings and illustrations?
- How will I introduce each new idea? How will I connect to the previous idea?

During these sessions, discussions and demonstrations should include the use of reflective commentary and metalanguage.

*Content*

- What information needs to be included?
- What can I afford to leave out?
- What message do I want to give?
- From what or whose point of view will I write?

### ***Representing Characters and Events in Literary Texts***

Discussions during Shared and Guided Reading sessions will help Early writers to develop understandings that authors represent characters and events in different ways. Shared, Interactive and Guided Writing sessions provide opportunities for students to be supported when making decisions about how to represent characters and events in their own literary texts.

- How will I represent my characters in this text?
- What words will I use to represent the characters?
- What events will happen in this text?
- How will my text end?

### ***Representing People and Ideas in Informational Texts***

Discussions during Shared and Guided Reading sessions will help Early writers develop understandings that authors represent people and ideas in different ways. Shared, Interactive and Guided Writing sessions provide opportunities for students to be supported when making decisions about how they will represent people and ideas in their own informational texts.

- How will I represent the people in this text?
- Do I know any real people like the one I am representing?  
How are they the same? How are they different?
- What words will I use to represent the person in this text?
- What facts, ideas and events will I include in this text?
- Am I representing the facts, ideas and events accurately?

### ***Use of Devices***

Early writers benefit from ongoing discussions about linguistic and print devices authors have chosen to influence meaning. Model linguistic and print devices, and encourage students to experiment with them in their own writing. They could include:

- using words that describe appearance, e.g. skinny, blue-eyed, beautiful;
- using words that describe actions, e.g. skipped, trotted, fell;
- using words that describe emotions, e.g. happy, frightened;
- using repetition, e.g. It was a dark, dark wood and she was a little, little girl;



- using different print sizes or fonts, e.g. SCREAM, STRONG;
- placement of illustrations or diagrams.

## Writing to Influence Social Issues

Early writers can begin to develop an understanding that writers draw on their social and cultural lives to analyse and represent the world around them. Students can be encouraged to write not only about topics that interest them, but also about social issues in their world from their own perspective.

As a class, students can be involved in creating a range of texts addressing social issues that concern them. Model and jointly construct texts such as posters, websites, letters to the editor, surveys, petitions or pamphlets.

For further information about the Contextual Understanding aspect, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 2: Contextual Understanding.

## Involving Students

### 1 What Have I Written?



**What Have I Written?** is an opportunity for students to record what has been written, for whom it has been written and the format it was written in. This type of record keeping helps Early writers to develop an understanding that there are many different purposes for writing and that some text forms are better suited to particular purposes.

- Provide students with the format from the *First Steps Writing* CD-ROM.
- Model how to record the purposes, audiences, topics and formats that have been written by the class during Modelled, Shared and Interactive Writing sessions.
- Allow time for students to begin their record sheets.
- Encourage them to add to the record sheets on a regular basis.

Reflecting on these records throughout the year will help students understand the many different purposes of writing and the numerous audiences a writer addresses.

What Have I Written?			
Why I Wrote (Purpose)	Who I Wrote To (Audience)	What I Wrote About (Topic)	Format
to recount	Aunty sue	what I did on my holiday	letter
to describe	Year 2 class	frogs	a report
to invite	stacey	my birthday party	invitation

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**Figure 6.9**

## 2 Text Innovation

Refer to Chapter 4: Role Play Writing Phase, p. 56.

## 3 Special Occasions

Special Occasions provides prime opportunities for students to consider the interests of a particular audience when creating a text. Birthdays, festivals, special days for mothers and fathers, days of national significance and anniversaries represent authentic reasons to write not only cards, but poems, songs and speeches. It is meaningful for students to acknowledge these occasions with some sort of written activity.

For Early writers, this could include any of the following ideas.

- A book of vouchers that promise appropriate favours for the recipient.
- A certificate.
- A crossword to convey a message of affection.
- An expression or metaphor to represent the event in history.
- A rap song about a special person.
- A poem about a special event or person.

It is important to recognise that different social, economic and cultural circumstances mean that students will attach varying degrees of significance to different occasions. Knowing students well and being flexible about the nature of the task enables teachers to be sensitive to family backgrounds and individual perspectives.



### Things I'll Do for Dad on Father's Day

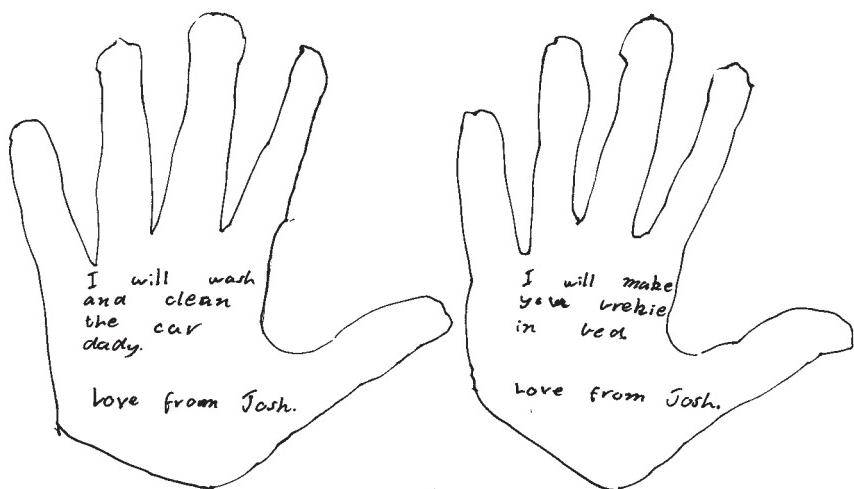


Figure 6.10

## 4 Getting the Message Across

Getting the Message Across requires students to focus on a particular audience as they recreate a text and to determine the appropriate language. Having students recreate the same story for different audiences helps them to understand and see how authors vary the choice of language to suit particular audiences.

- Provide groups with copies of the same textless picture book or series of pictures.
- Have the groups orally create stories around the pictures.
- Allocate each group a particular audience to write for, e.g. a very young child, their peers, the wider school community.
- Have each group collaboratively write the story for their allocated audience.
- Invite the students to share their work with the class.
- Discuss some of the decisions made as the text was created for the given audience.

## 5 Catchy Advertising



Advertisements are a powerful tool to use when teaching students to identify devices used by authors. Raising awareness of simple devices used by authors is crucial to have students begin using them in their own writing. In the activity Catchy Advertising, students will identify the target audiences of advertisements, identify the devices used by the authors and attempt to replicate use of these devices when creating their own advertisement.

- Discuss with students the purpose of advertisements. The central purpose of all advertising is to sell a product or a service.

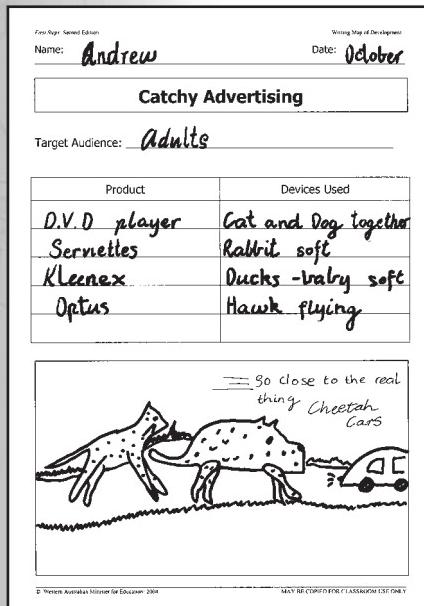


Figure 6.11

- Provide students with a collection of advertisements aimed at a target audience, e.g. young children. Discuss each advertisement, identifying and recording the devices used to attract the reader's attention.
- Brainstorm a list of other products that this target audience would probably be interested in.
- Have each student select one of these products and create an advertisement incorporating some of the devices previously discovered.
- Have students share their new advertisements with the whole class and discuss the devices used.

## 6 Highlighting the Senses

To evoke all the senses of a reader is a powerful device used by authors. Highlighting the Senses (Bernays & Painter 1991) is an activity that supports students in using this device; it involves their analysing their own writing to identify which senses they are appealing to.

- Share an enlarged piece of text with the whole class.
- Work together to identify parts of the text and the language used to evoke particular senses, e.g. see, hear, touch, feel.
- Have each student select a piece of his or her own writing to analyse.
- Allocate a coloured marker for each sense impression:
  - blue — see
  - pink — hear
  - green — touch
  - orange — feel
  - yellow — taste
- Have students highlight their writing, identifying parts of the texts and the language used to evoke particular senses.
- Allow time for students to share their writing with others and discuss which sense they appealed to the most.
- Allow time for them to work on refining their writing, including details to evoke any missing senses.

## 7 You Be the Artist



Writers use many devices to evoke particular emotions in the reader. Illustrators also make decisions about their art to evoke emotions and to further enhance the text. You Be the Artist requires students to consider some of the devices illustrators use. It also provides the



opportunity for them to explore devices to apply to drawings used to support their own writing.

- Display differently illustrated texts for students to explore.
- Use the questions provided on the *First Steps Writing* CD to stimulate small-group discussions around the devices used by different illustrators.
- Provide time for students to identify and discuss the type of visual devices that illustrators use, e.g. colour, size, detail, medium, position on page.
- Give students the opportunity to select one of their own pieces of writing, discuss it with a peer and make some decisions about the visual devices that could be used for illustrations.
- Have the students illustrate their work. Provide time for them to share their illustrations and explain any devices used.

## 8 Once Upon a Time



Once Upon a Time ([www.media-awareness.ca](http://www.media-awareness.ca)) encourages students to explore the way characters are represented in texts and create representations alternative to those presented by the authors.

- Have each student record words on the format provided to describe a particular type of character, e.g. an ogre. It is likely that students will suggest words such as huge, roars, mean, ugly or smelly.
- Provide time for them to sketch the particular type of character and write a brief description.
- Read students a story in which the character is not represented in a stereotypical way.
- Have students record certain words, then sketch and describe how the character is represented in this story.
- Discuss how the character is the same or different from students' original descriptions and illustrations of that particular type of character.

## 9 Characters Come Alive

To help students represent a character in a specific way — for example, a bad character — it is important to provide many examples of how authors bring characters to life. *Characters Come Alive* helps students to discover and identify the way authors add life to their characters.

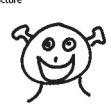
Once Upon A Time	
Name: <b>Emma</b>	
Date: <b>Nov. 25</b>	
<b>Before Reading</b> What we know about... <b>big</b> <b>roar</b> <b>huge</b> <b>scarry</b> <b>smelly</b> <b>live in swamps</b>	<b>After Reading</b> What we read about... <b>thortfull</b> <b>kind</b> <b>funny</b> <b>loves Fiona</b>
  <b>My Picture</b>	  <b>My Picture</b>
<b>My Description</b> <b>Ogres are big</b> <b>smelly</b> <b>creachy</b> <b>They live in</b> <b>stiky swamps</b>	<b>My Description</b> <b>Ogres can be</b> <b>kild</b> <b>and</b> <b>thortfull</b> . They <b>are very funny</b> .
<small>© Webcom Awareness Network for Education</small>	
<small>MAY BE USED FOR CLASSROOM USE ONLY</small>	

Figure 6.13

### **Early Writing Phase**

- Over time, read a variety of literary texts to the students.
- After each reading, encourage discussion about the way the author made the characters come alive.
- Create a class chart of things that can be done when writing to help make characters sound real.
- Provide students with a collection of costume pieces, e.g. hats, shoes, clothes, household objects, bags. Ask them each to choose one piece and write a brief description of a character associated with the chosen object.
- Encourage students to select and apply ideas recorded on the class chart.
- Provide time for them to share their writing and receive feedback about the character development.

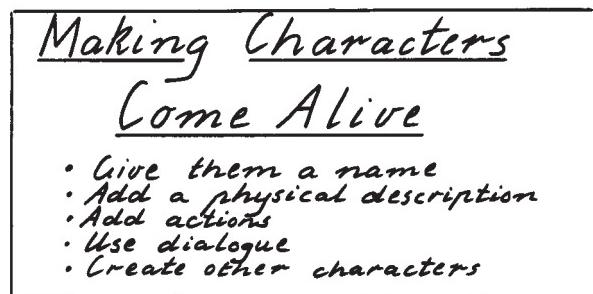


Figure 6.14

### **10 Who Am I?**

Who Am I? encourages students to explore different ways of representing characters in literary texts or people in informational texts. It requires them to reflect on their reading and to write accurate descriptions about selected characters.

Harry Potter
--------------

<p><u>Who Am I?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wears glasses.</li><li>• Lives with Aunt and Uncle.</li><li>• Starts a new school.</li><li>• Is a wizard.</li><li>• Has a scar on forehead.</li></ul>
---

It would be useful prior to this activity to have students brainstorm a list of adjectives that can be used to describe characters and people.

- Have each student select a character or a person from a favourite text.
- Provide each student with a card to record the name of the character or person.
- Have them write a description of the character or person on the other side of the card. This could include information about physical features, dress and actions.
- Organise students to read their descriptions to the whole class, encouraging others to guess each character or person.

Figure 6.15



# CONVENTIONS

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Provide opportunities for students to develop, refine and use new vocabulary.
- Continue to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. topic words, signal words.
- Build students' knowledge about words and word parts, e.g. contractions, suffixes.
- Continue to build phonological awareness and graphophonic knowledge, such as:
  - representing the same sound with different letters or letter combinations, e.g. beach, me, ski, thief
  - representing different sounds with the same letters or letter combinations, e.g. enough, though, through.
- Continue to teach the use of punctuation, e.g. commas.
- Continue to teach the parts of speech and their relationships, e.g. subject–verb agreement.
- Teach students to construct and manipulate sentences, e.g. expanding, reducing, transforming.
- Model how to group together sentences with similar information.
- Continue to build knowledge of different text forms, emphasising:
  - purpose, e.g. reports describe
  - text structure, e.g. reports list details
  - text organisation, e.g. reports use headings
  - language features, e.g. reports use present tense.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for supporting Early writers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.

- Building Vocabulary
- Building Word Knowledge
- Developing Phonological Awareness and Graphophonic Knowledge
- Understanding Conventions of Grammar
- Building Text-Form Knowledge

## ***Building Vocabulary***

All students, when they arrive at school, already have an oral vocabulary based on the speech variety and experiences at home. Research has shown that vocabulary acquisition is crucial to academic development (Baker, Simmons & Kameenui 1998), so it is important for teachers to ensure Early writers have every opportunity to expand their vocabulary across a broad range of contexts and experiences.

## ***Developing Vocabulary***

Creating a rich language environment that includes reading aloud, reciting poems and rhymes, singing songs and playing with language will help refine understandings about written language. Early writers can be supported in developing their vocabulary in the following ways.

- Modelling the use of language in different contexts.
- Valuing existing speech variety if non-standard or in an additional language or dialect.
- Introducing subject-specific vocabulary across the curriculum, e.g. the language of mathematics.
- Providing experiences through activities outside the classroom, e.g. trips or excursions, and activities inside the classroom, e.g. manipulating materials, inviting guest speakers, or capitalising on any impromptu events.
- Discussing written words at every opportunity, pointing out the author's choice and why it is the 'best fit' in the context.
- Involving students in meaningful word-play activities.
- Jointly constructing Word Walls featuring the words students are learning, e.g. high-frequency words, topic or theme words.
- Providing opportunities for students to read and write for a range of purposes.
- Immersing students in a range of texts.
- Talking about talk.
- Using a rich vocabulary in all contexts.
- Developing language across all learning areas, e.g. physical education.

## ***Building a Bank of Words that Are Automatically Spelt and Used***

At all phases of development students copy, recall and have-a-go at spelling words during independent writing. The bank of words that can be automatically spelt and used can be made up of high-frequency words, personally significant words, topic or theme words, or signal words.



Exploring and using these words in reading, writing and any across-curriculum activities will help to reinforce their recognition and use. For some students, ongoing systematic instruction is essential to help them develop automaticity; for others, the repeated reading and writing of texts helps them develop the ability to spell a bank of words automatically.

In this phase, it is important to build on the bank of words that students already know. For Early writers, include the following.

#### *High-frequency words*

These occur frequently in written texts; sources include *Five Hundred Words Most Frequently Used in Children's Writing* (Gentry & Gillet 1993), *One Hundred High Frequency Words* (Fountas & Pinnell 1998) and *One Hundred Most Frequent Words in Writing* (Routman 2000).

#### *Personally significant words*

These are words significant to a student personally, e.g. words associated with an interest or a hobby.

#### *Topic or theme words*

These words are related to topics, themes or subject areas being studied, e.g. insects, magnets.

#### *Signal words*

These are associated with text forms and text structures, and signal the relationships between ideas in the text, e.g. therefore, before, although, because.

Early writers can be encouraged to use Have-a Go-Pads after writing. Use of these encourages students to identify words they may have misspelt in their writing and also provides a framework for generating alternative spellings for selected words. At this phase, students can also begin to take responsibility for keeping a spelling journal to record words they already know how to spell as well as those they are currently learning.

## **Building Word Knowledge**

As students' understanding of graphophonics expands, it is essential to extend their knowledge of words, word parts and how words work. It is important to build word awareness through experiences such as discovering rules, participating in open-ended activities and playing with words.

## **Early Writing Phase**

The following list may provide a focus for supporting Early writers.

- Suffixes e.g. ing, ed
- Plurals, e.g. s, es
- Homophones, e.g. to, two, too
- Contractions, e.g. I'll, can't
- Compound words, e.g. football, sunshine

## ***Developing Phonological Awareness and Graphophonic Knowledge***

Phonological awareness is the ability to hear, combine and manipulate the different sound units of spoken words. This may include the following.

- Word awareness: spoken language is made up of words; words are representations of objects (cat), emotions (love) and concepts (height); words can rhyme.
- Syllable awareness: some words have a single syllable and others have more than one.
- Onset and rime awareness: words with a single syllable are made up of onsets and rimes.
- Phonemic awareness: words are made up of individual sounds, or phonemes.

In this phase it is important to consolidate students' awareness and understandings of syllables and phonemes.

Graphophonic knowledge is the understanding of sound–symbol relationships as they apply to the alphabetic principle of written language.

Early writers will draw on their knowledge of the different sound–symbol representations when attempting to spell unknown words or to proofread their writing. The focus for Early writers is on the following graphophonic understandings.

- One sound can be represented with different letters or letter combinations, e.g. corn, caught, door, roar, warm, ball.
- Different sounds can be represented with the same letters or letter combinations, e.g. head, great, leaf.

## ***Understanding Conventions of Grammar***

At all phases of development it is important to draw attention to the conventions of grammar used in a range of texts. This includes conventions associated with punctuation, parts of language, sentence structure and overall text construction. It is important that these conventions are introduced, revisited, and practised in meaningful contexts. Modelled and Shared Reading and Writing provide a springboard for exploring many of the conventions.



## Punctuation and Parts of Speech

It is beneficial for Early writers to be able to use, talk about and understand the following aspects:

- punctuation, e.g. commas, question marks, exclamation marks;
- the function and relationship of parts of speech, e.g. adverbs, adjectives, noun–pronoun agreement, subject–verb agreement.

## Constructing Sentences

Early writers benefit from a focus on developing and refining their understanding of the characteristics of effective sentences.

- Sentences have a subject and a verb.
- Sentences use a variety of connecting words to join phrases or clauses, e.g. and, but, because, therefore.
- Sentences can be expanded or reduced to create specific meaning or add variety.
- The order of words in a sentence influences meaning.

## Grouping Related Information

Students in this phase benefit from ongoing modelling of how to group related information, e.g. ‘First we will write the sentences about what lions eat and then we will write about how fast they move’.

## Building Text-Form Knowledge

Building students’ knowledge about text forms assists them to successfully construct a range of texts and to understand the purpose, structure and organisation of those texts. Students benefit from reading different examples of the same text form, making comparisons and identifying defining features.

Modelled, Shared and Guided Reading and Writing sessions provide an opportunity for Early writers to discuss and build their knowledge about the conventions of structure, organisation and language features of a range of text forms.

Knowledge about text forms includes understanding the purpose, audience, organisation, structure and language features of a particular form.

## Purpose

All texts are written and read for a reason. The purpose may be to entertain, as in most literary texts, or to explain, describe or inquire, as in some informational texts. Understanding the purpose of a writing event will assist students to make decisions about text organisation and structure, and the language used.

## **Early Writing Phase**

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Students need to be exposed to a range of texts written for a variety of purposes. Early writers should be encouraged to create texts for a range of purposes. For a list of forms related to purposes, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 1.

### **Text Organisation**

Text organisation refers to the way a text is organised — the layout. Early writers will benefit from understanding text-form frameworks; for example, a report begins with a generalisation, then has several paragraphs describing characteristics, followed by a conclusion.

Early writers can be introduced to the function, terminology and use of a range of organisational features, such as:

- headings and subheadings;
- captions;
- diagrams and other visual aids (photographs, graphs, tables, cross-sections);
- tables of contents;
- bold or italicised words;
- a computer menu;
- bullet points;
- blurb.

It is important to encourage Early writers to begin using the appropriate organisational features in their own texts. For a list of further organisational features in different texts, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 1.

### **Text Structure**

Text structure refers to the way ideas, feelings or information are linked within a text. These could include:

- problem and solution
- compare and contrast
- cause and effect
- listing: logical or chronological sequence, collection of details.

Early writers will benefit from being exposed to a variety of text forms that use different structures.

### **Language Features**

The term 'language features' refers to the type of vocabulary and grammar used in a text. Each text form has specific language features that are appropriate to it; for example, a retell may include the following features:



- specific participants, e.g. my family and I;
- simple past tense, e.g. chased, went, saw;
- personal pronouns, e.g. I, we, hers, his;
- linking words to do with time, e.g. firstly, then, yesterday, after that.

Students can be introduced to appropriate language features within the context of learning about new forms of writing. For a detailed description of language features linked to text forms, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 1.

For further information about the Conventions aspect, see

*Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn:

- Chapter 3: Conventions
- Chapter 1: Use of Texts.

## Involving Students

### 1 Word-Sorting Activities

Refer to Chapter 5: Experimental Writing Phase, p120.

### 2 String Poems

Creating String Poems helps students to develop, refine and use new vocabulary. In this activity, they generate adjectives related to a topic and manipulate placement of them to construct a poem.

- Select a noun from a current topic or theme, e.g. dinosaurs.
- Have the noun written on at least twelve separate cards or stick-on notes.
- Place three of the cards in the top row of a sentence maker.
- Ask small groups to suggest and write three adjectives on cards provided to describe the chosen noun.
- Collect the cards from all groups.
- Place three cards in the next row of the sentence maker and add the noun card to the end of the line.
- Continue placing three adjectives and a noun card on each line.
- Re-read the cumulative poem as new lines are added.
- Complete the poem by placing three noun cards on the last line.
- Re-read the whole poem.
- Have students write new words on blank cards and add them to the poem, or create their own String Poem based around another noun.

*Extensions*

- If the poem has been constructed in a sentence maker or with stick-on notes, students can rearrange the words to come up with new poems. Keep the cards in envelopes or containers so that they can be used for future activities, such as word-sorting.
- Introduce parameters for the adjectives included in each line, e.g. one-, two- and three-syllable words; three words that start with the same letter; three words that rhyme.

### **3 Secret Messages**

This is an activity that provides students with the opportunity to decode messages. Secret Messages can be created with a focus on new vocabulary, spelling generalisations, or graphophonic understandings being introduced or consolidated.

Students will enjoy deciphering messages that use a combination of clues; however, it is appropriate to limit the variation when they are first working with Secret Messages. The types of clues used might include:

- removing prefixes or suffixes from words, e.g. take the suffix 'ing' from 'jumping';
- adding prefixes or suffixes to words, e.g. add the prefix 'un' to 'happy';
- combining syllables from different words, e.g. add the first syllable of 'monkey' to the last syllable of 'Saturday';
- removing a consonant or consonant cluster from a word and blending a new one in the same place, e.g. take 'sh' from 'shop' and replace it with 'st';
- finding a small word within a word, e.g. a four-letter word in 'balloon';
- creating compound words, e.g. add 'house' to the end of 'light';
- using an alphabet sequence for short words, e.g. add 'm' after the first letter of the alphabet.

Modelling the process and collaboratively solving Secret Messages is beneficial at this phase.

- Think of a meaningful sentence or message, e.g. **Have your project ready by Monday.**
- Write a series of clues that will enable students to decode the message.
- Ensure students have access to a copy of the alphabet.
- Provide time for them to 'crack' or solve the Secret Message. They could record the message in their diaries.



- Keep a copy of all activities to build up a permanent collection for future use.

Once students are familiar with the procedure for deciphering Secret Messages, challenge them to write messages for the class to decipher.

#### 4 Sound Hunter

Participating in Sound Hunter helps students continue to develop graphophonic understandings, expand their awareness of spelling generalisations and increase vocabulary. It is best introduced and practised in the context of a text. Texts such as books, charted songs and poems, magazines, brochures, web pages, modelled writing examples or written messages can provide contexts in which to hunt for words.

- Choose a specific focus. It could be words:
  - with a particular sound;
  - with a particular letter pattern;
  - of a particular type, e.g. contractions, compound words, a particular prefix or suffix.
- Select a text that clearly exhibits the chosen focus.
- Read the text for enjoyment.
- Revisit the text, hunting for the chosen focus, e.g. words with the /e/ sound. Have students identify and record words with this focus.
- Discuss the words, and ask students to sort them into subgroups, e.g. according to the letter pattern used to represent the /e/ sound.
- Create a chart of the words the students found. Leave room for more words to be added to the chart.
- Challenge students to find more examples of words with the chosen focus.
- Revisit, discuss and add to the chart on future occasions. Encourage students to use the chart as a reference when writing.

#### 5 What Comes Next?

What Comes Next? is an adaptation of what was known as the game 'Hangman'; however, What Comes Next? requires students to guess the letters in the correct order rather than randomly.

<u>Different Spellings for the Same Sounds</u>		
<i>ay</i> away runway holiday layer spray	<i>ai</i> strain grain container chain	<i>a-e</i> flame space escape stage
<i>eɪ</i> vein weight	<i>ə</i> radio station chamber	Reneé

Figure 6.16

As a daily activity, What Comes Next? can provide an excellent context for reinforcing vocabulary and spelling generalisations, and exploring sound–symbol relationships. Understandings that can be developed include:

- letters together represent the specific sounds in a word;
  - prefixes and suffixes can be added to words;
  - an ending can be added to make a word plural;
  - past tense can be indicated by the ending ‘ed’ or ‘t’;
  - some words that are pronounced the same are spelt differently and have different meanings — homophones, e.g. **whole**, **hole**; **piece**, **peace**.
- Choose a word from a familiar context that features a letter pattern or a spelling generalisation, or is a part of speech. Draw lines representing each letter in the word.
- Provide a specific clue for the first letter, e.g. **the first letter is a consonant in the second half of the alphabet**. When students guess the correct letter, record it on the first line.
- Invite students to guess the remaining letters of the word.
- As they guess the letters, write any guess that is incorrect but has a possible letter sequence in the ‘Could Be’ column. Incorrect guesses without possible letter sequences should be recorded in the ‘Couldn’t Be’ column as single letters (not modelling incorrect letter patterns). When students guess a letter that could not be right, a segment of a mouse outline is drawn.
- Continue this until the correct letters are given and recorded.
- The game ends if the drawing of the mouse is completed before students guess the word.

As an extension, students can be challenged to find other words linked to the letter pattern, spelling generalisation or part of speech identified in the game word; for example, if the chosen word was ‘climbing’, groups of students could be challenged to find words with ‘cl’, ‘silent b’ or ‘ing’.

Once students are familiar with the game, encourage them to play What Comes Next? with a partner.

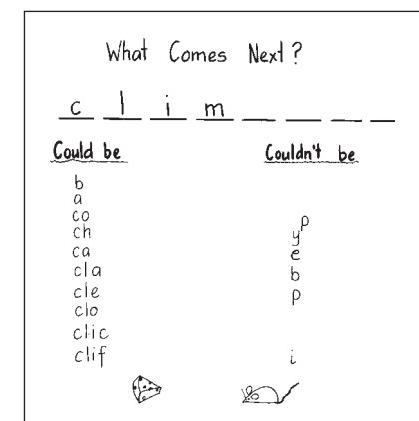


Figure 6.17

## 6 Tired Words

Tired Words encourages students to develop, refine and use new vocabulary. In this activity students critically analyse the choice of describing words they use in their writing.

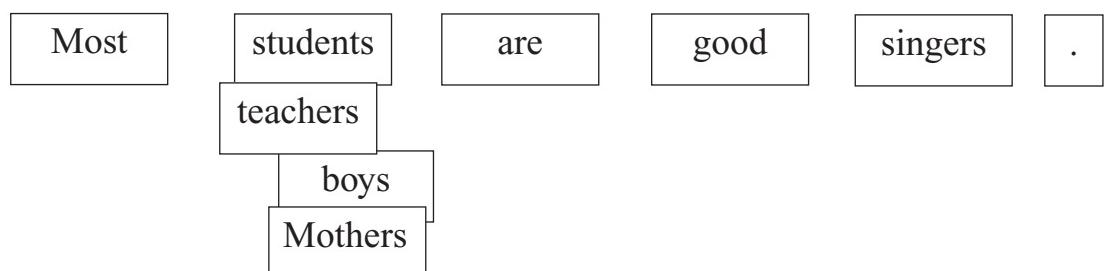


- Choose an overused or tired word, e.g. said, from a sample of writing.
- Have students brainstorm words or scan through texts to locate words that could replace the overused or tired word, e.g. yelled, whispered, roared, questioned, commented.
- Write these words on a chart, discussing the differences in meaning. Challenge students to create oral sentences using the suggested words.
- Have them collect other suitable words, and add these to the chart.
- Provide time for students to analyse a previously created piece of personal text to identify if and where they may have used the tired word. Encourage them to select a replacement word from the newly created chart.

## 7 Word for a Word

Word for a Word helps students understand and use the names and functions of parts of speech. It involves transforming a sentence by taking turns to change one word at a time; a noun must be changed for a noun, or a verb for a verb. While it is important that the same part of speech is substituted, nonsensical sentences are acceptable.

- Create a simple sentence and write each word on a separate card.
- Nominate a part of speech in the sentence to be transformed, e.g. a noun, an adjective.
- Have students provide alternative words for the selected part of speech, and record these on new cards.
- Overlay the substitute words and re-read the transformed sentence together.
- Discuss how the meaning of the sentence is altered when a particular word is changed.
- Repeat the process, substituting a different part of speech.



**Figure 6.18**

## 8 Base Words

Base Words is an open-ended activity that provides small groups of students with an opportunity to work at their own level to create and investigate the spelling of new words. Early writers enjoy the challenge of creating as many words as possible using a given base word and selected prefixes and suffixes.

- Provide students with a focus base word and a selection of prefixes and suffixes.
- Provide guidelines for the creation of words, e.g. all words must include the base word; the last letter of the base word may be changed or deleted when adding suffixes; all words must be real words.
- Challenge students to make as many new words as possible in a given time, adding prefixes, suffixes, or both to the base word.
- Allow time for them to share words and reflect upon the lists created. Have them investigate the meaning of the new words and their relationship to the base word.
- Record patterns or spelling generalisations the students discover.

See how many new words you can make by adding to the base word ‘happy’. Sometimes you may need to change or remove a letter when adding a suffix.

un	mis	happy	es
er			es
pre			ly
ing			est
	s		

Make sure the words you make are real words.

**Words We Made**

- happily
- unhappy
- happiest
- happier

**Figure 6.19**

## 9 Controlled Cloze

Completing Controlled Cloze activities helps students to understand the conventions of grammar, such as use of parts of speech and punctuation, and sentence structure. Controlled Cloze involves challenging students to replace missing parts of a sentence.

- Provide students with a piece of text that contains a number of sentences in which selected parts have been deleted.
- Have them read the text and provide suggestions for the missing words or punctuation marks.
- Provide time for them to share their completed texts.



## 10 Crazy Cloze

In Crazy Cloze, one particular part of speech in a text is deleted. Students are asked to suggest replacement words without seeing the text, often producing a nonsensical, humorous text. It is critical to then use this nonsensical text to discuss how and why the words selected affected meaning.

- Organise students to work in pairs.
- Have each pair list ten examples of a particular part of speech, e.g. adjectives.
- Provide a passage from which ten examples of this part of speech have been removed.
- Allow time for students to record words from their lists in the spaces. Words should be recorded in the order they are listed.
- Have students read their completed passages aloud. Discuss any mismatches in meaning. Identify any word that may not be the required part of speech, and the influence it has on the sentence. Make any amendments where necessary.

## 11 Chain Writing

Refer to Chapter 5: Experimental Writing Phase, p. 127.

1. blue
2. happy
3. small
4. round
5. fluffy
6. fat
7. enormous
8. rough
9. angry
10. kind

Macy wandered down to the beach. It was a blue, happy day and there were small people everywhere. She found herself a round space and laid out her fluffy beach towel. The water looked fat so she decided to go for a enormous swim. She found some of her rough friends and chatted to them before deciding to buy a angry ice-cream and walking home to her kind house.

Figure 6.20

## 12 Physical Sentence Construction

Refer to Chapter 5: Experimental Writing Phase, p. 127.

## 13 Sentence Expansion

Refer to Chapter 5: Experimental Writing Phase, p. 126.

## 14 Sentence Joining

Students can learn how to make simple sentences into more detailed sentences by joining two or more thoughts together. This activity is one way to encourage them to write compound sentences, using conjunctions.

- Create a collection of simple sentences on sentence strips.
- Have one student select a sentence e.g. It is raining today, and challenge a second student to identify another sentence that could be joined to the first, e.g. We will play inside.
- Invite the class to brainstorm conjunctions that could be used to join the two sentences, e.g. so, because, and.

### **Early Writing Phase**

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- Write appropriate conjunctions on blank cards and place each in turn between the sentences.
- Have students read the new sentences and discuss how the meaning is altered with each conjunction used, e.g. It is raining today, so we will play inside.
- Repeat the activity using different sentences.
- Have students find two short sentences in their own writing and challenge them to select an appropriate conjunction to join the sentences.
- Provide time for students to share their new sentences.

#### *Extension*

Provide a sentence stem and a list of conjunctions. Have students create appropriate endings to the sentence using the list of conjunctions. Read the sentences and discuss the meaning associated with each conjunction; for example:

She went swimming *because* it was a hot day.  
She went swimming *after* school on Thursdays.  
She went swimming, *then* went home for dinner.  
She went swimming, *but* wanted to go horseriding.

## **15 What Is a Topic Sentence?**

This activity provides students with the opportunity to match topic sentences to simple paragraphs. Participating in the activity helps students to understand that a topic sentence tells the reader what the next group of sentences is about.

- Provide students with examples of simple paragraphs without beginning topic sentences.
- Provide matching clear, well-structured topic sentences on separate cards.
- Challenge students to work in small groups to match topic sentences and paragraphs.
- Provide time for them to talk about and explain ‘What is a Topic Sentence?’
- Have groups share their discoveries.
- As a whole class, create suitable topic sentences for other paragraphs.

## **16 This Goes with That**

This Goes with That helps students to understand that when creating texts, related information is grouped together and the resulting text is called a ‘paragraph’. The activity involves students in brainstorming facts and information they know related to a familiar topic. This is



then sorted according to type and used as a basis for creating related sentences.

- Select a topic, e.g. frogs, weather patterns.
- Have students brainstorm a list of facts related to the topic. List the facts on separate cards or large stick-on notes.
- Support students in clustering related facts together.
- Organise students into groups. Give each group one of the clusters and ask them to write a heading to cover those facts, e.g. what frogs do.
- Provide time for the groups to read through the facts and write an appropriate topic sentence.
- Have students use the brainstormed facts to create three supporting sentences.

## 17 Generic Games

The games listed below are generic because they can be used to support an understanding of the conventions of grammar, graphophonic understandings and spelling generalisations. Each one can be used to suit a range of purposes. Games are a great way to consolidate understandings, although they are not a replacement for explicit teaching.

When using games, it is important to:

- keep them fun and informal;
- use settings that encourage interaction among students;
- embed them in the context of work that is already being done in the classroom;
- ensure the students are fully familiar with how to play them.

The following games are included in this section.

Word Back Spied Her

Name Game

Tic Tac Toe

How Long Is a Piece of String?

Add a Letter

Crosswords

Spelling Tennis

Words, Glorious Words

On-line Games

### Word Back Spied Her

Word Back Spied Her can be used for a wide range of purposes and is an excellent game to support the development of vocabulary and word knowledge. Words are printed on stick-on labels, and a mystery word is placed on the back of each student. Students are challenged to work out, from a list provided, which particular word they have.

- A stick-on label containing a mystery word is placed on each student's back. Ensure that the student does not see the word.
- Students are then provided with a list of possibilities; the number and type of words on the list should vary according to student needs and abilities. Individualised lists can be created if necessary.
- Discuss the guidelines for the game.
  - 1 Questions need to be related to the features of the word; for example:
    - 'Does my word start with the letter \_\_\_\_?'
    - 'Does my word have more than one syllable?'
    - 'Does my word have a suffix (prefix/silent letter)?'
    - 'Does my word have the letter pattern \_\_\_\_?'
    - 'Is my word a verb (adjective/noun/contraction/plural)?'
  - 2 Responses can only be 'yes' or 'no'.
  - 3 A student can only ask another student one question before moving on.
  - 4 A student who is unable to answer a question may say 'pass'.
- Teach students how to eliminate and mark off words from their list as they ask their questions.
- Direct them to move into designated groups as their words are determined; for example, groups could have words categorised as contractions, in alphabetical order, or as parts of speech.

It is critical that either during or at the end of the game students are given the opportunity to reflect on and discuss the types of questions that were asked. This will help them to distinguish between useful and less useful questions, and so may be a guide for future questioning.

### Name Game

- Players stand in a circle.
- Introduce a simple sentence pattern, such as one consisting of a proper noun, a verb and an adverb, e.g. **Susie skates skilfully**.
- Players take turns to suggest words in the designated sequence.



Player 1 says 'John'.

Player 2 says 'jumps'.

Player 3 says 'joyfully'.

Player 4 says 'Tania'.

Player 5 says 'talks'.

- A player who is unable to supply an appropriate word sits down.

When players are familiar with the game they can suggest their own rules; for instance, asking 'Can you say Philip photographs flies?

Does the sentence have to make sense?'

### *Tic Tac Toe*

Tic Tac Toe is played the same way as Noughts and Crosses, but instead of using noughts and crosses writers create a sequence of three words (diagonally, vertically or horizontally). Player A may have to write words with a particular sound, e.g. /e/, and Player B may have to write words with a particular spelling pattern, e.g ir.

Students play the game in pairs.

- Have each pair draw a 3-by-3 grid, making a total of nine squares.
- They then take turns to write a word with the allocated focus, attempting to complete a sequence of three squares.

As students become familiar with Tic Tac Toe, they can select the focus for their words. A great advantage of Tic Tac Toe is that students at very different developmental levels can play together; for example, Player 1 writes words with the prefix 'dis', while Player 2 writes words containing a 'tr' sound.

### *How Long Is a Piece of String?*

In this game, students change one consonant or vowel in a given word to create a string of new words. They work against a timer to create the longest piece of string (the strip with the most new words).

- Students each have a long strip of paper.
- Call out a beginning word, e.g. bag. Ask students to write this on their paper.
- Challenge them to create as many new words as possible in the time provided, but only by changing one letter at a time, e.g. bag-bat-mat-met.
- An egg timer as a timing device provides great motivation.
- Have the students count the number of new words made in the allotted time.

## Early Writing Phase

### Variation

Give students a beginning word and an ending word. Now they have to change one letter at a time until they have made the end word; for example, moving from 'head' to 'toes'.

**HEAD LEAD LEED LEES TEES TOES**

### Add a Letter

The challenge in this game is to add and rearrange letters to make the longest word possible.

- Start with a one- or two-letter word.
- Add one letter at a time to make a new word (three letters, four letters, five letters).
- The order of the letters can be changed, but the word must be a real word each time; e.g. at ate rate crate traces craters.
- Continue to add letters, trying to make the longest word possible.

### Crosswords

Students can use personal word lists or class topic words to make crosswords for their classmates to solve. Crosswords are best made on grid paper, and students will need two grids — one for the answers and one for the clues.

Each setter follows these steps.

- Select 10 words to be the basis of the crossword.
- Place them in the answer grid. Words may overlap.
- Put a number in each square where a word starts.
- Place the numbers in the same position in the blank grid.
- Shade in the squares that won't be used on that grid.
- Write the clues to the words in the answer grid.
- Give the blank grid to a classmate to solve the puzzle.

M	O	O	N		P	L	U	T	O
		C							
		E	N						S
S	P	A	C	E	C	R	A	F	T
A		N		P					A
T				T					R
U				U					S
R				N					
N				E	A	R	T	H	

1		2			3				
					4				5
6									
					7				

Figure 6.21

**ACROSS**

1. Men have landed on here
3. The planet furthest from the sun
6. How you might get to space
7. The planet we live on

**DOWN**

2. Where space capsules used to land when returning to earth
4. A planet that has the same name as the Roman god of the sea
5. The sun is the largest of these
6. The sixth planet from the sun

*Spelling Tennis*

Spelling Tennis can be played by two people or two teams. It is played and scored like a tennis match. Words can come from personalised spelling lists or class topic words.

- Player 1 calls out a word; Player 2 has to spell it correctly.
- If Player 2 doesn't spell it correctly, the score becomes 15 – love.
- If it is spelt correctly, the score is love – 15.
- Player 2 then calls out a word for Player 1 to spell.
- The scoring continues as in tennis.

*Words, Glorious Words*

Providing students with opportunities to learn and use new vocabulary is an important part of language development.

Demonstrating a love of words through an activity such as Words, Glorious Words will encourage students to discover and use interesting vocabulary.

- Write a favourite word, e.g. cinnamon, on a piece of card.
- Say the word aloud to the students.
- Ask students to close their eyes while you say the word again.
- Say the word slowly, emphasising the different sounds in it.
- Have students say the word in different ways, e.g. fast, slowly, loudly, softly.
- Where possible, give them a concrete example, e.g. give them a stick of cinnamon to smell or taste.
- Use the word in a sentence.
- Encourage the students to use the word as many times as they can during the day.
- Introduce a new word each day and encourage students to find a favourite word they can share with the class. Words from different languages could also be used.
- Add these words to the Word Wall.

## Early Writing Phase

### On-line Word Games

The World Wide Web provides a host of exciting word games suitable for students to use. Some — such as Scrabble — can be played with more than one person. Use a search engine to find an abundance of games using key words such as spelling games, vocabulary development or word games.

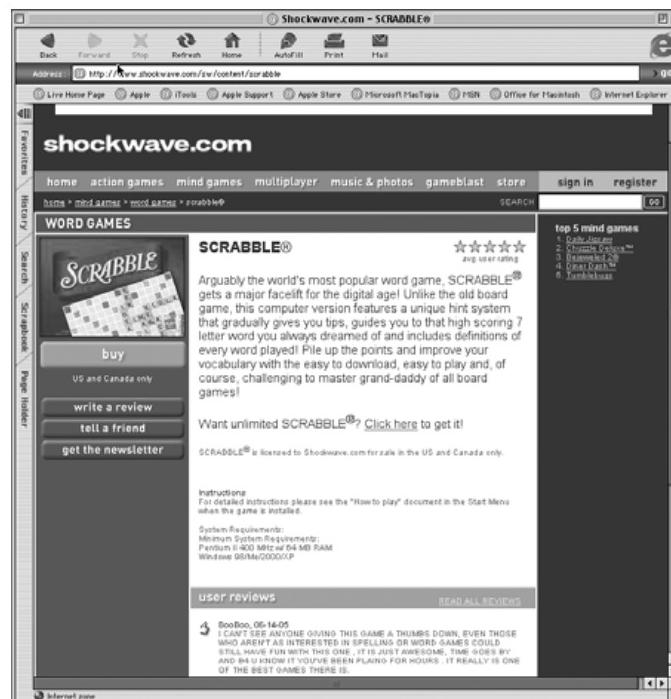


Figure 6.22



# PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. grammatical knowledge, cultural knowledge.
- Continue to teach strategies used throughout the writing process, e.g. determining importance.
- Continue to teach spelling strategies, e.g. using visual memory.
- Teach students to plan for writing in a variety of ways, e.g. brainstorming, classifying.
- Teach students how to use proofreading and editing to refine their writing.
- Continue to model a variety of publishing alternatives, highlighting the purpose and audience.
- Teach students how to find, record and organise information from texts, e.g. note making, note taking.
- Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.

## Organisation of the Processes and Strategies Aspect

There are several differences in the organisation of the Processes and Strategies aspect. Both the Teaching Notes and the Teaching and Learning Experiences (Involving Students) are located in the *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

The rationale for these differences is that the processes and strategies of spelling and writing are not conceptually hierarchical and therefore not phase-specific. In all phases, a variety of writing processes and strategies need to be introduced, developed and consolidated.

What varies from one phase to the next is the growth in:

- the number and integration of strategies used throughout the processes of writing;
- the awareness and monitoring of writing processes;
- the efficiency in use of the processes of writing;
- the ability to articulate the use of the strategies used in the processes of writing;
- the awareness of how use of processes helps with composing texts.

# Supporting Parents of Early Writers

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF EARLY WRITERS

Early writers create a small range of texts such as stories, greeting cards and reports. These students begin to select information to include in their writing according to the purpose and the audience. They write simple sentences using correct punctuation, and know how to automatically spell some frequently used words. When writing unknown words, Early writers often select letters on the basis of sound — for example, ‘becos’.

## Supporting Early Writers in the Home

Early writers will benefit from a range of experiences in the home setting. Ideas for providing appropriate experiences are available on Parent Cards located on the *First Steps* Writing CD-ROM. Teachers can select appropriate cards for each Early writer and copy them for parents to use at home.



### Parent Cards

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>1</b> General Description and How to Support Early Writers<br><b>2</b> Encouraging Writing<br><b>3</b> Writing with Your Child<br><b>4</b> Writing and Reading Links<br><b>5</b> Supporting the Writing Process | <b>6</b> Supporting Punctuation and Grammar<br><b>7</b> Developing Understandings about Different Types of Writing<br><b>8</b> Developing Vocabulary<br><b>9</b> Supporting Spelling<br><b>10</b> Building Spelling Knowledge through Games |
|--|---|

Also available on the Writing CD-ROM is a parent-friendly version of the Writing Map of Development.

## CHAPTER 7

# Transitional Writing Phase

*My Life so far in Year 3*

My first day in year 3 was got put next to my year 3 good, not quiet as good as friends Angus and Jordan. My the days after but what I favorite thing we have done so far was good for a first is researching a nocturnal animal. But there has to be something bad and there Bush Baby and the information defenly was in this I was getting said the bush situation, Mrs. Traver got very angry. Bush Baby has large eyes and lived mad and angry sometimes from hollow trees. But I can't write some noisy people, I'm not until we do our good copy of going to mention any names our report on a nocturnal animal but some people got quite angry and mean.

But things started getting better when Mrs. Traver came up with the idea of the sample chart, and even better I won the first week we did it! A few weeks later the kids moved into rooms and I

*Some great things here!  
Gee, do I really get  
that angry again?  
No... no I don't!*

*Please pacify, sis!*

Dear Loving Mother,

I would like for you to consider these long lasting shoes. The ones that I have now are shot! I bet the Katy Christian Ministries wouldn't even accept them as a donation.

They are the best because my feet stopped growing yesterday so I won't need anymore. As you can see everybody in my class has them. Everyday I know that everyone will be wearing them because they're so trend! They'll also last me for ages people test them at shoe factories to make sure they don't fall apart! If you buy them I will always do everything you ask me. (Even wash the dishes)

Love your sweet daughter,  
Natalie

P.S. - I've noticed your looking better and thinner everyday.

A praying mantis goes into name by holding its front legs in front of its body. A praying mantis has a pair of 3 legs, A pair of two wings and a head, a thorax and an abdomen.

A praying mantis is one of the more vicious insects in the world. It can kill and eat any other insect it can find including a spider or scorpion even though they don't eat insects they are Arachnids.

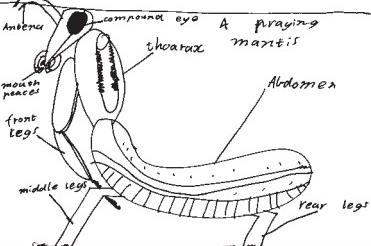


Figure 7.1

## Global Statement

Transitional writers show increasing control over the conventions of writing such as punctuation, spelling and text organisation. They consider audience and purpose when selecting ideas and information to be included in texts. They compose a range of texts, including explanations, narratives, brochures and electronic presentations. Writing shows evidence of a bank of known words that are spelt correctly. Transitional writers are moving away from a heavy reliance on sounding out and are beginning to integrate visual and meaning-based strategies to spell unknown words.

# Transitional Writing Indicators

## Use of Texts

- ◆ Composes a range of texts but may not fully control all elements.
- ◆ Composes texts by finding, recording and organising information appropriate to purpose.
- Includes essential information and brief elaboration or description.
- Uses rhyme, rhythm and repetition for effect, where appropriate.
- Demonstrates knowledge of differences in organisation, structure and language features of a range of texts when writing.
- Writes simple conclusions with some attempt to summarise or provide a resolution.
- Establishes place, time and situation in literary texts.
- Imitates complications from well-known stories.
- Composes texts that move beyond drawing on personal experiences.
- Shows evidence of personal voice.
- Uses the metalanguage associated with writing, e.g. procedure, noun, punctuation.

## Contextual Understanding

- ◆ Explains the purpose and audience of a range of text forms.
- ◆ Selects ideas to include in own text to suit purpose and audience.
- ◆ Discusses alternatives about how to represent characters and events when composing literary texts.
- ◆ Discusses alternatives about how to represent people and ideas when composing informational texts.
- ◆ Experiments with the use of devices, e.g. repetition of words or phrases.
- Sometimes represents characters or people in stereotypical ways, e.g. the brave prince, the wicked witch.
- Considers the audience, and includes some background information.
- Can select an appropriate form of writing from a small range.
- Chooses topics likely to appeal to a particular audience.

## Conventions

- ◆ Varies vocabulary to add interest.
- ◆ Spells and uses an increasing bank of known words correctly.
- ◆ Knows less common letter patterns and the sounds they represent, e.g. tion, ph.
- ◆ Writes a variety of simple and compound sentences, using correct punctuation.
- ◆ Groups related information, sometimes without regard for paragraphing conventions.
- Uses a small range of appropriate conjunctions, e.g. but, because, so, if.
- Uses appropriate subject–verb agreements.
- Uses appropriate noun–pronoun agreements.
- Writes in both first and third person.
- Usually maintains appropriate tense for the text form, e.g. timeless present tense, past tense.

- Attempts to use passive tense, e.g. The environment was damaged by pollution.
- Writes dialogue, but the reader has difficulty in deciding who said what.
- Uses titles and headings appropriately.
- Experiments with the use of less common punctuation marks, e.g. colons, dashes, semicolons.
- Is aware of the importance of standard spelling for published work.

## Processes and Strategies

- ◆ Draws upon semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge when writing, e.g. vocabulary knowledge, text-structure knowledge.
- ◆ Uses an increasing range of strategies throughout the writing process, e.g. determining importance.
- ◆ Uses an increasing range of strategies to spell unknown words, e.g. using visual memory.
- ◆ Begins to organise ideas before writing, e.g. brainstorming, drawing, jotting.
- ◆ Proofreads, edits and revises own writing when directed.
- ◆ Plans for and creates a published text that reflects the intended purpose and needs of the audience.
- Uses letters to represent all vowel and consonant sounds in a word, placing vowels in every syllable.
- Is beginning to use common letter patterns and critical features to spell.
- Uses visual knowledge of common English letter sequences when attempting to spell unknown words, e.g. dollar (dollar), thousand (thousand).
- Includes all the correct letters, but may sequence them incorrectly, e.g. thier (their), recieve (receive).
- Usually represents all syllables when spelling a word, e.g. uncontrollably (uncontrollably).
- Draws on some spelling generalisations to spell unknown words.
- Is able to recognise if a word doesn't look right and to think of alternative spellings.
- Selects relevant information from a variety of sources before writing.
- Brainstorms to elicit ideas and information before writing.
- Uses planning aids to help organise ideas, e.g. flow chart, story map.
- Attempts to reorder text to clarify meaning, e.g. moves words, phrases, sentences.
- Attempts to use editing and proofreading guide after composing.
- Refines writing after peer or teacher conference.
- Experiments with various ways of publishing information, e.g. using word processors or tape recorders, making charts.

*Note The terms 'write' and 'writing' encompass the use of traditional tools, such as pen and paper, as well as the use of electronic tools such as computers or mobile phones.*

*The term 'texts' refers to both literary and informational texts, and includes visual, spoken or written texts. These may be printed, electronic, live or multimodal.*





# Major Teaching Emphases

## Environment and Attitude (see p. 186)

- Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.
- Foster students' enjoyment of writing.
- Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. new forms, devices, vocabulary.
- Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.

## Use of Texts (see p. 190)

- Continue to expose students to a range of text forms, and discuss the features of each.
- Provide opportunities for students to craft a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with writing, and encourage its use.

## Contextual Understanding (see p. 201)

- Discuss some of the reasons writers choose one particular text form over others.
- Encourage students to explain their decisions about:
  - text form selected
  - information and ideas included or omitted
  - language used.
- Teach students how to represent characters and events to create specific effects in literary texts.
- Teach students how to represent people and ideas to create specific effects in informational texts.
- Teach students the use of devices, and discuss how they may influence the audience, e.g. flashback, illustration size.
- Encourage students to use writing to influence change about social issues that concern them.
- Discuss how writers' knowledge, experiences and perspective influence the composition of a text.

## Conventions (see p. 211)

- Provide opportunities for students to develop, refine and use new vocabulary.
- Continue to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. less common words, subject-specific words.
- Continue to build students' knowledge

about words and word parts, e.g. prefixes, suffixes, homophones.

- Continue to build students' graphophonic knowledge, such as using less common sound-symbol relationships, e.g. ocean, nation, fashion.
- Extend students' knowledge of the use of punctuation, e.g. apostrophes, quotation marks.
- Extend students' knowledge and use of parts of speech and their relationships, e.g. noun-pronoun agreement.
- Teach students to construct and manipulate a variety of sentences, e.g. using conjunctions, using phrases and clauses.
- Teach students how to group sentences about similar information together to form a paragraph.
- Continue to build knowledge of different text forms, emphasising:
  - purpose, e.g. explanations explain phenomena
  - text structure, e.g. explanations use cause and effect
  - text organisation, e.g. explanations include diagrams or cutaways
  - language features, e.g. explanations use signal words to show cause/effect.

## Processes and Strategies (see p. 225)

- Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. world knowledge, linguistic features.
- Continue to teach strategies used throughout the writing process, e.g. synthesising.
- Continue to teach spelling strategies, e.g. using analogy.
- Continue to teach students to plan for writing in a variety of ways, e.g. graphic organisers, storyboards.
- Continue to teach students how to use proofreading, editing and revising to refine their writing.
- Encourage students to select and use publishing formats that best suit purpose and audience, e.g. web page, slide show, poster.
- Continue to teach students to find, record and organise information from texts, e.g. using graphic organisers.
- Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.

# Teaching and Learning Experiences

## ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE

### ***Major Teaching Emphases***

- Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.
- Foster students' enjoyment of writing.
- Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. new forms, devices, vocabulary.
- Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.

## Teaching Notes

A classroom community that supports and nurtures Transitional writers is one that is supportive and challenging. As Transitional writers come to terms with the combination of the elements of the writing process, there need to be many opportunities to experiment with new aspects of writing. The focus for developing positive attitudes towards writing as well as a supportive environment for Transitional writers is organised under the following headings.

- Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment
- Fostering Enjoyment of Writing
- Encouraging Experimentation
- Writing as a Social Practice

### ***Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment***

A supportive environment is one in which both the physical aspects and the culture of the classroom are considered. A positive classroom climate is one in which students have opportunities to use and combine printed, spoken, visual and digital processes. These opportunities contribute to students' willingness and eagerness to write.

### ***Physical Environment***

It is beneficial to jointly construct a print-rich environment with Transitional writers. A diverse range of print, created and displayed,



will illustrate the many functions of print. Owocki (1999) classifies print in the following ways.

- *Environmental* — print that gives information about the world, e.g. labels on maps, messages on the notice board.
- *Occupational* — print associated with jobs, e.g. print for a homemaker could include catalogues, school newsletters, newspapers, webpage.
- *Informational* — print for storing, retrieving and organising information, e.g. a homework schedule, a train timetable.
- *Recreational* — print for leisure activities, e.g. magazines, instructions for games, emails for socialising.

Transitional writers need to be encouraged to use classroom print as a resource when creating their own texts. Modelled, Shared, Interactive and Guided Writing sessions present ideal opportunities to demonstrate how to use print from the environment to support writing.

### ***Classroom Culture***

As well as providing appropriate materials and a carefully planned physical environment, it is important to also consider how to create a positive classroom writing culture.

Develop such a culture for Transitional writers in any of the following ways.

- Encourage students to write for genuine purposes and audiences.
- Have high expectations of students and ensure they know what these are.
- Provide opportunities for students to select their own topics, ways to plan, and publishing formats.
- Provide a range of ICT resources for use in creating texts.
- Encourage students to take responsibility for refining their own writing.
- Allow time for students to share their writing with others.
- Value writing, and demonstrate this attitude to students.
- Establish, teach and reinforce procedures for solving challenges during writing.
- Provide opportunities for students to evaluate their own work and discuss the judgements they have made.
- Incorporate purposeful writing into all learning areas.

## Fostering Enjoyment of Writing

It is important for Transitional writers to see writing as a purposeful and worthwhile social practice. Take every opportunity to foster their enjoyment of writing in the following ways.

- Provide opportunities for daily independent writing on topics of personal choice.
- Provide multiple demonstrations of the strategies effective writers use.
- Provide opportunities for students to use a range of ICT resources when combining print, images and sounds, e.g. computers, software programs, interactive whiteboards, digital cameras.
- Provide authentic writing experiences that are linked to students' interests and experiences, and have a clear purpose.
- Provide ongoing opportunities for students to be involved in focused conversations about writing. This may happen in an informal way when students discuss their writing with a peer; Author's Chair provides for a more formalised opportunity to talk about writing, and provides a supportive structure for this to take place.
- Encourage an interest in words. Allow students to play with words, do crosswords and work out rules for doing them. Look at word sleuths, palindromes, words inside words, rebus words and other word-study activities.
- Encourage and praise all attempts to spell new words, while helping students to aim for conventional spelling.
- Provide ongoing, targeted feedback and encouragement.
- Encourage students to publish their work on-line, e.g. <http://english.unitecology.ac.nz/writers/home.html>
- Involve students in setting their own writing goals.
- Develop 'author sharing' time with another class in the school where students can read their writing to an audience. If completed writing is left for others to read and make comments about it on a feedback sheet, students get to see themselves as 'real' writers.
- Provide comfortable and quiet spaces to encourage independent reading. A selection of the books included in the reading display could be examples of the text students are currently studying. Display students' writing alongside commercial publications.
- Read to students every day, exposing them to different literary and informational texts.
- Have a range of software packages available for students to use, e.g. Claris Works, Story Weaver Deluxe, PrintShop Deluxe.



## Encouraging Experimentation

Transitional writers should be encouraged to reflect on ways to improve in selected focus areas and to experiment with all aspects of writing.

This can be done by inviting students to:

- extend the variety of texts they write for real purposes;
- choose their own topics;
- use a variety of strategies when writing;
- use a multistrategy spelling approach to write unknown words;
- investigate words and their meanings;
- extend their vocabulary;
- discuss writing strategies, and any discoveries made;
- experiment with different technology to create multimodal texts, e.g. adding images;
- experiment with colour, font size, style, animation and special effects when using presentation software packages.

## Writing as a Social Practice

The focus when teaching writing in the classroom is to provide many real-world situations that require the use of written language. The ultimate goal is for students to function in society as literate individuals who can use writing to communicate their ideas, share information, stimulate thinking, formulate questions and influence policy and action.

Continue to provide opportunities where Transitional writers see themselves as writing for real reasons and able to influence the actions of others; for example, create and conduct a school survey on a particular issue and use the results to sway decision makers.

For further information about Environment and Attitude, see *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning*, Chapter 5: Establishing a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment.

# USE OF TEXTS

## **Major Teaching Emphases**

- Continue to expose students to a range of text forms, and discuss the features of each.
- Provide opportunities for students to craft a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with writing, and encourage its use.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for helping Transitional writers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.

- Exposure to a Range of Text Forms
- Opportunities to Craft a Range of Texts
- Crafting Personal Voice and Individual Style
- Using Metalanguage

### **Exposure to a Range of Text Forms**

Transitional writers will benefit from ongoing opportunities to read, re-read, interact with and discuss a variety of increasingly sophisticated literary and informational texts. These may come from across-curriculum areas, popular culture, the Internet or the community. They could be multimodal, class-made, or published materials presented in a range of formats such as books, websites, emails, faxes, CD-ROMs or software programs.

During Modelled, Shared and Interactive Writing sessions, show students how successful writers create a range of text forms for different purposes. These could include the creation of texts used to:

- entertain, e.g. song lyrics, plays, myths;
- recount, e.g. biographies, autobiographies;
- describe, e.g. indexes, glossaries;
- socialise, e.g. SMS messages, emails, chat-room conversations;
- explain, e.g. complaint forms, flow charts, graphs;
- instruct, e.g. road directions, manuals;
- inquire, e.g. interview questions, surveys;
- persuade e.g. expositions, job applications, advertisements.



## Opportunities to Craft a Range of Texts

Transitional writers benefit from being taught the writing skills that are valued and important for success at school. It is vital that students have a clear understanding of the purpose and intended audience for all their writing.

Although students are familiar with most aspects of the writing process, they will continue to gain from daily modelling of writing behaviours. Modelled, Shared and Guided Writing sessions provide opportunities to demonstrate, discuss and practise many aspects of writing. These could include any of the following.

- Selecting different text forms for different purposes and audiences.
- Organising texts.
- Structuring texts.
- Selecting information to be included in the text or in each paragraph.
- Using language features.
- Using headings, subheadings, diagrams and graphs.
- Planning, drafting, refining and publishing writing.

Transitional writers may derive enjoyment and consolidate their skills and strategies by writing texts that have similar structure and language features. This allows them to build understandings about a particular text form. However, if one type of text dominates a student's independent writing to the exclusion of all others, it is possible that that student may not become familiar with the structure, features and vocabulary of a wider range of text forms. There are many ways to extend the repertoire of text forms students use.

- Provide a variety of contexts for writing by including writing in all learning areas, e.g. explanation in health, biography in art.
- Provide time for personal-choice writing.
- Collect, read, display and analyse samples of different text forms.
- Construct frameworks with students as a starting point for planning to write a new form.
- Allow time for practice, then help students to evaluate their written work using the framework as a guide for discussion.
- Provide explicit feedback about particular aspects of students' writing.
- Arrange for authors to visit and discuss their craft.
- Encourage students to talk about their writing and to take responsibility for improving it.
- Continue reading aloud daily to expose students to new text forms.

- Provide both a reading and an oral-language program that complement the writing program.
- Set up Author's Chairs in and between classes so that students can openly discuss their writing.

### ***Crafting Personal Voice and Individual Style***

Many things — including a writer's purpose, world view, multiple identity and culture — influence voice within text. Voice in writing is defined in numerous ways.

'Writing words that will make readers listen and be affected.'  
(Tony Romano 2004)

'Voice is the imprint of ourselves on our writing.'  
(Don Graves 1994)

'Voice in writing has to do with a unique personality-on-paper.'  
(Ralph Fletcher 1993)

At this phase it is important to help students continue to develop their understanding and use of voice. This can be achieved in a range of ways.

- Show and discuss examples of sentences, passages or entire texts that demonstrate voice.
- Share samples of students' writing that have a strong sense of voice.
- Compare the voice in passages of writing. Discuss how it differs.
- Discuss how the author's voice creates interest.
- Read several books by one author and identify the voice, e.g. the style and word choice.
- Model how the choice of language can create or change voice, e.g. formal and informal.
- Discuss how sentence length can affect voice.
- Have students return to journal entries and identify examples where their voice is evident.
- Have students identify and share a passage where an author's voice is strong.

### ***Using Metalanguage***

Students need to be supported in building a vocabulary that they can use to discuss and describe language, their own writing and the writing process. The vocabulary used to talk about language is known as metalanguage, and when students are able to use it to talk competently about their own writing and learning, it helps them to understand how language operates. Developing



metalinguage also helps students to understand the support and feedback provided by teachers.

To help Transitional writers continue to expand and use terms associated with writing and written language, it is important to use metalinguage as part of everyday teaching. This can be done across learning areas, as part of targeted discussions, during explicit demonstrations, during one-on-one conversations with students, or as part of planned Modelled, Shared, Interactive or Guided Writing sessions.

Certain terms tend to be more prominent when focusing on different aspects of writing; for example, when working with Transitional writers, consider the use of the following terms.

- Use of Texts: editorial, opinion, rhyming couplet.
- Contextual Understanding: representation, validity, point of view.
- Conventions: derivatives, word origins, cause and effect.
- Processes and Strategies: refining, summarising, self-questioning.

For further information about the Use of Texts aspect, see

*Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn:

- Chapter 1: Use of Texts
- Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

# Involving Students

## 1 2C2D (Collect, Compare, Display, Discuss)

2C2D refers to collecting, comparing, displaying and discussing specific text forms or parts of texts for the purpose of analysis. Providing this opportunity gives students exposure to a range of text forms and the chance to discuss the features of each.

Apart from entire texts, students can collect samples of:

- beginnings
- endings
- plot fragments
- settings
- character descriptions
- dialogue
- work by one author
- devices that authors use, e.g. similes, metaphors.

### ***Collecting***

Collecting is inspired by a personal interest, e.g. 'I enjoyed the way this author wrote in a diary form, so I asked the librarian if there were any other books written like that'. Collecting allows comparisons to be made between a variety of texts such as books, movies, songs, poems, CD-ROMs and Internet sites.

### ***Comparing***

Comparing can be simply a mental process of comparing the features of texts, but it could be represented by a table, a diagram, an oral presentation or a written piece, e.g. 'I couldn't help but notice that both of these texts have similar beginnings, both of them use flashbacks'. An innovative way of encouraging students to make comparisons is to provide a question to promote inquiry; for instance, 'What do the stories x, y and z have in common? They all have . . . '.

### ***Displaying***

Displaying representations of compared texts and text parts provides:

- models, e.g. 'You've now read three books that tell the story in the form of a flashback, what about trying that writing style when you next write a story'.
- ongoing referencing opportunities, e.g. 'The television program that was on last night had the sort of characters described in the 3 books I compared in my 2C2D chart'.



- inspiration, e.g. 'I love the way that Victor Kelleher describes the setting in his books. I am going to keep a copy of these in my writing folder'.

### ***Discussing***

Discussing focuses on similarities and differences, including how and why a text is crafted in a particular way, e.g. 'In science fiction novels they often start with an event that is happening in that time and then go back to tell us how it came about to be that way'.

- Direct students to collect over a given time examples of texts or parts of texts each containing a chosen criterion, e.g. dialogue.
- Provide time for them to individually compare the use of the criterion in the chosen texts.
- Have them represent their comparisons and display their representations.
- Provide time for them to discuss their comparisons.
- Encourage them to experiment with the chosen criterion in their own writing.

## **2 Read and Retell**

Read and Retell (Browne & Cambourne 1989) is a simple activity that is flexible in its use and provides an opportunity for students to develop an understanding of the purpose, audience and structure of a text. Retelling requires Transitional writers to listen to or read a text, organise key information they have understood, then share and compare their retell with others.

Retelling provides an excellent context in which to expose students to the features of a range of text forms and to use this knowledge when they are writing. Transitional writers can be involved in retelling both literary and informational texts. Students will benefit from creating different retells.

- *Written to written retells* — students read a text and retell in writing.
- *Diagram to written retells* — students 'read' a diagram and retell in writing.
- *Drama to written retells* — students view a dramatic presentation or a movie and retell it in writing.

The following procedure can be adapted to suit the purpose, context, focus and form of the text being used.

- Select a text and display the title.
- Ask students to predict the plot and the vocabulary that may be used in the text. Share their predictions in small groups.

- Direct the students to read the text.
- Allow them to re-read it as many times as is necessary.
- Provide time for them to create a written retell.
- Have them share retells with a partner, in a small group or with the whole class.
- Provide time for them to compare their retells with a partner.

### **3 Writingo**

Refer to Chapter 6: Early Writing Phase, p. 143.

### **4 What's Your Opening Line?**

What's Your Opening Line? helps students focus on the craft of writing effective introductions. It involves their analysing and creating effective opening sentences with the goal of understanding that these help writers to catch the reader's attention and give a glimpse of what is to follow.

- Read aloud texts with a variety of types of opening sentences, e.g. a quote, a question, a statistic.
- Re-read the opening lines and discuss the way each lead has been written.
- Have students group similar leads and create a label for each type.
- Display a selection of intriguing pictures, prints or photographs.
- Have students work in pairs to write two or three different opening sentences for one of these. They should be encouraged to imitate the type of leads discovered in the previously read texts.
- Invite pairs to select the most effective opening sentence and share it with the whole class.
- Attach opening sentences to the pictures, prints or photographs, and display them.
- Create a class chart of the types of leads discovered by the students.

#### **Types of Leads**

- Posing a question — What does Australia bring to mind?
- Presenting a short retelling — The car careered off the road, smashed into the light pole and catapulted into the front yard.
- Addressing the reader directly — Imagine standing at the top of the ski run.
- Providing a vivid description — He was wet, bedraggled and forlorn-looking as he stumbled towards the door.
- Starting with a quotation — 'You will be fine,' he said. 'Diving is so easy.'
- Taking a stand on a contentious issue — The logging of native forests is criminal.
- Offering an interesting fact or statistic — The rabbit population has been reduced by 50%.
- Using a famous quote — 'Life wasn't meant to be easy.'
- Stating an alarming fact — This year over 20 000 people from one state died of a smoking-related disease.
- Sharing an engaging story or show an action — Potatoes soared through the air. Carrots were launched across the table with guided missile-like accuracy. It was lunch on the last day of school, and we got ourselves into a lot of trouble.



## 5 Everyday Poetry

Everyday Poetry (Rowe & Carter 1998) is a simple way for students to begin developing their own voice in writing. Students use everyday situations or events as a stimulus to create simple poems. The use of familiar topics allows them to express personal thoughts and feelings and to develop the use of voice in their writing.

- Introduce the guidelines or framework for creating an Everyday Poem.
- Model the creation of an Everyday Poem.
- Have students follow the guidelines and create their own poems.
- Collect all their poems and read them aloud to the class. Invite students to discuss who they think wrote each one and why they chose that person. Discuss the evidence of the writer's voice.
- Create a class book of Everyday Poems that can be read during independent reading time.

**Guidelines for an Everyday Poem**

Write the name of a familiar situation or event.

    Write something someone may say.  
     Write something you may say.  
     Write a noise you may hear.  
     Write something you may think.

Choose one line to repeat (as often as you wish).  
     See how this works as a poem.

**Lunchtime**

**I want to go home!**  
**Aaarrhhh!**  
**Not this again!**  
**Aaarrhhh!**  
**Wish I could go and play.**

Written by Sophie Flint  
     Year 5




Figure 7.2

## 6 Feelings

This activity helps Transitional writers to develop a sense of voice in their writing. Students read a variety of texts, then discuss and record the ways authors express the same feeling in different ways.

- Select passages that attempt to express a similar feeling, e.g. suspense, anger, happiness, loneliness, love.
- Read — or have students read — the selected texts.
- Have students identify words or phrases that helped them sense the feeling being expressed by each author. Discuss similarities and differences in the authors' voices.
- Have students write passages to express the same selected feeling, using personal voice to help portray this.
- Provide time for them to share passages and discuss the voices heard.

## 7 Authors' Apprentice

Authors' Apprentice provides Transitional writers with opportunities to practise writing particular parts of a text. It involves the teacher reading aloud to students, stopping at a chosen point, then inviting students to become 'apprentice writers'. Students can complete a variety of parts of a text. Any of the following ideas are appropriate for Transitional writers.

- Writing a sequel to a text read.
- Writing a prequel to a text read.
- Writing an alternative ending.
- Writing an alternative beginning.
- Changing the setting of an event.
- Adding a chapter to the text.
- Transforming a text into a different mode, medium or format, e.g. changing a book into a radio play.
- Changing the time of the text, e.g. to present, past or future.

## 8 My Authority List

Refer to Chapter 6: Early Writing Phase, p. 149.

## 9 Become a Script Writer

Become a Script Writer provides the opportunity for students to prepare simple scripts from familiar texts. It involves their working in small groups to make decisions about how to create a performance reading of a text. Students create dialogue for each character based on the storyline presented.

For Transitional writers, script writing should begin with short, familiar literary texts with a range of characters and some action. Transitional writers will require ongoing modelling and scaffolding during the process of creating the scripts.

- Have students read and re-read the text.
- Organise them in small groups.
- Allocate character and narrator roles.
- Discuss the difference between text to be read and a script to be performed, e.g. actions are not included in a script.
- Have each group list the key events that will take place in the performance.
- Provide time for each student to identify and highlight the parts of the text where the allotted character is involved.
- Have the whole group re-read the text together, stopping at each part to discuss and record the dialogue that would be used.



Students collaboratively write the script, including parts spoken by a narrator.

- Allow time for groups to rehearse and refine the performance reading of the prepared script.
- Provide an opportunity for students to present the reading to an audience.

## 10 Retelling from the Heart

Refer to Chapter 6: Early Writing Phase, p. 148.

## 11 E-Pals

Refer to Chapter 6: Early Writing Phase, p. 151.

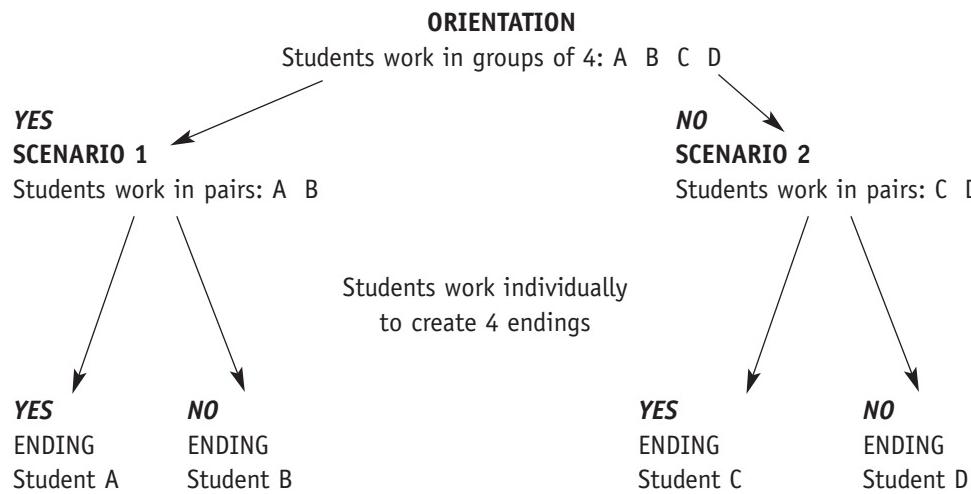
## 12 Choose Your Own Adventure Story

Writing Choose Your Own Adventure Stories is a great way to help students understand how to create electronic texts containing hyperlinks and alternative pathways. This activity allows students to see that texts can be non-linear and non-sequential. Groups of four work together to create an orientation for a narrative, pose questions, and develop possible scenarios to complete the text.

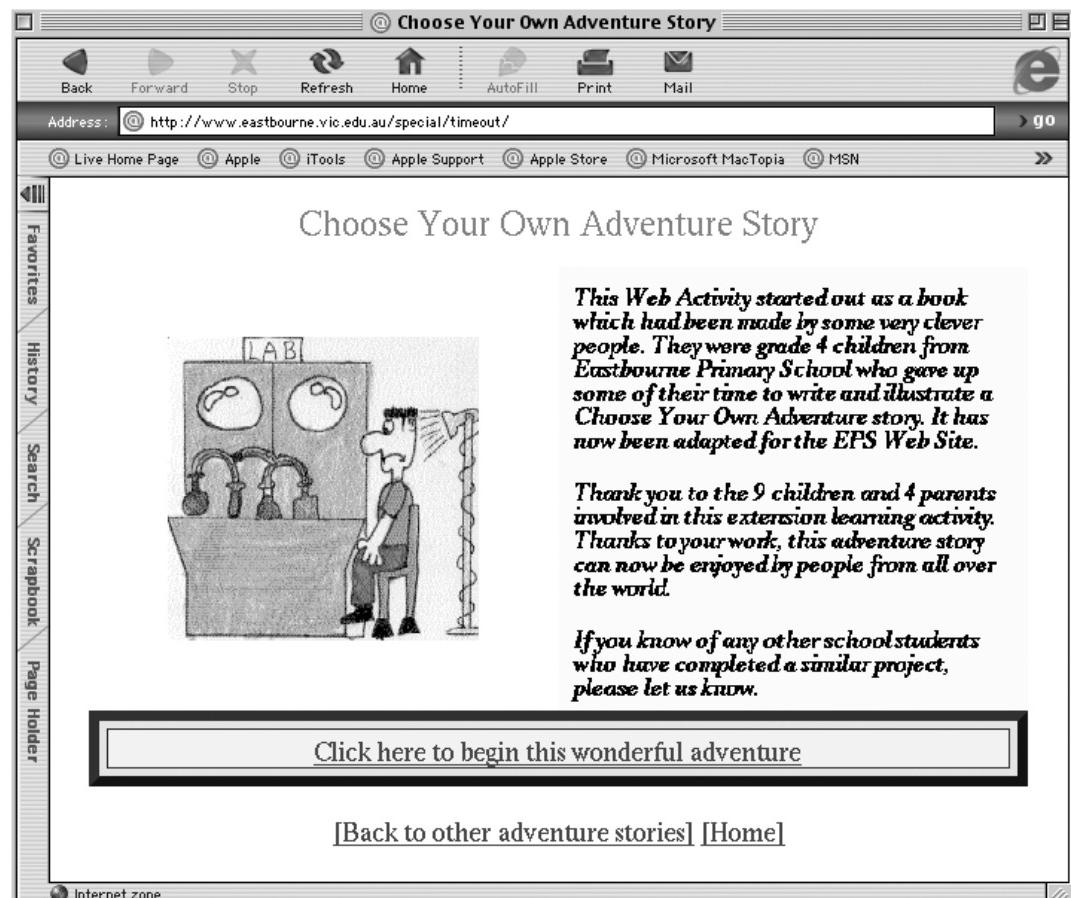
- Divide the class into groups of four. In each group, label the students A, B, C and D.
- Provide each group with seven cards labelled as Orientation, Scenario 1, Scenario 2, Ending 1, Ending 2, Ending 3, Ending 4.
- Have the group work together to create the orientation of their story. In this section, they must establish the setting, the time and the main characters.
- Have students finish this section with a question that requires a 'yes' or 'no' answer, e.g. **Will Sarah go to the party?**
- Have students A and B work together to write the events for Scenario 1 as if the answer to the question is 'yes'.
- Have students C and D write the events for Scenario 2 as if the answer to the question is 'no'.
- Ensure each pair finish their scenario with another yes/no question.
- Allocate to each student in the group the writing of an ending.
- Provide time for each to write an ending to follow a 'yes' or a 'no' answer.
- Show students how to publish their texts on a school website, using hyperlinks between the sections.

Once students are familiar with creating Choose Your Own Adventure Story in small groups, they can be challenged to begin creating their own hypertexts.

## Transitional Writing Phase



**Figure 7.3 A sample flow chart**



**Figure 7.4 One group's adventure story**



# CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Discuss some of the reasons writers choose one particular text form over others.
- Encourage students to explain their decisions about:
  - text form selected
  - information and ideas included or omitted
  - language used.
- Teach students how to represent characters and events to create specific effects in literary texts.
- Teach students how to represent people and ideas to create specific effects in informational texts.
- Teach students the use of devices, and discuss how they may influence the audience, e.g. flashback, illustration size.
- Encourage students to use writing to influence change about social issues that concern them.
- Discuss how writers' knowledge, experiences and perspective influence the composition of a text.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for helping Transitional writers to develop contextual understanding in writing is organised under the following headings.

- Choosing Text Forms
- Exploring Decisions Writers Make
- Representing Characters and Events in Literary Texts
- Representing People and Ideas in Informational Texts
- Use of Devices
- Writing to Influence Social Issues
- Discussing the Writer's World View

### ***Choosing Text Forms***

While Transitional writers understand that different text forms have different purposes, the focus in this phase is on discussing which text form best suits a particular purpose and audience, and why. Discussions could include scenarios where students need to justify which form they would choose in different situations; for example, students can discuss which text form would be most appropriate for situations such as the following.

- Describing how you completed a science experiment.
- Thanking your Grandma for a birthday present.
- Remembering the items you need to buy from the grocery store.
- Persuading the canteen manager to have different food available.

Transitional writers need support to make adjustments in their writing as they broaden their understanding of audience needs and expectations. They benefit from crafting texts for a range of audiences, including audiences where the effect on the reader may not be known — for example, writing a ‘letter to the editor’.

### ***Exploring Decisions Writers Make***

It is important for Transitional writers to understand the impact that purpose and audience have on the choices a writer makes about text form, content and language. The focus in this phase is to support students to make informed choices as they write.

Transitional writers benefit from opportunities for ongoing conversations about the decisions authors and illustrators make when creating texts. Modelled, Shared and Interactive Writing sessions provide opportunities to demonstrate the types of questions authors ask themselves, and how they make choices about these questions.

#### *Purpose and audience*

- Why am I writing this text?
- Who is my target audience?
- What do I know about my audience (age, gender, interests)?
- What does my audience want or need to know?
- What will my audience/reader expect to see in this text?
- What will I do to appeal to the audience?

#### *Form and organisation*

- What text form will I choose?
- What organisational features can I incorporate?
- How will the reader expect to see this set out?
- What is the best way to present/publish this information?

#### *Content*

- What information needs to be included or left out?
- What point/s do I want to make?
- From what or whose point of view will I write?
- What is the most appropriate language to use?
- Do I need to find further information?
- What resources could I use to find relevant information?

During these sessions, discussions and demonstrations should include the use of reflective commentary and metalanguage.



## **Representing Characters and Events in Literary Texts**

Discussions during Shared and Guided Reading sessions will help Transitional writers to consolidate understandings that authors create specific effects by the way they represent characters and events. Shared and Guided Writing sessions provide opportunities for students to be supported in making decisions about how they will represent characters and events to create specific effects in literary texts.

- What special effect do I want to create in this text, e.g. a mean character?
- How will I represent this character in the text?
- What language will I use to represent the character?
- What events will happen in this text?
- How will my text end?
- If I include illustrations, how will they support the specific effect?

## **Representing People and Ideas in Informational Texts**

Discussions during Shared and Guided Reading sessions will help Transitional writers to consolidate understandings that authors create specific effects by the way they represent people or facts. Shared and Guided Writing sessions provide opportunities for students to be supported in making decisions about how they will represent facts or people to create specific effects in informational texts.

- How will I represent the people in this text?
- Do I know any real people like the one I am representing? How are they the same? How are they different?
- What words will I use to represent the person in this text?
- What is the purpose of writing this text?
- What facts do I want to include in this text?
- What facts do I want to exclude from the text?
- Am I representing the facts accurately?

## **Use of Devices**

Through targeted reading experiences, Transitional writers will be aware that authors and illustrators use different linguistic and print devices, depending upon audience and purpose. During Shared and Guided Reading, discussing the devices, speculating on the author's reasons for choosing them and assessing their effectiveness will give Transitional writers a deeper understanding of how devices impact on readers' interpretation of texts. In this phase, the focus is to teach students how to use some of these devices in the texts they create, and to consider their possible effect.

Model and encourage the use of devices such as:

- choice of language, e.g. descriptive, emotive;
- inclusion or omission of details;
- foreshadowing — giving a hint of things to come, e.g. As he lay waiting, he heard a noise through the open window;
- understatement — used to downplay the gravity of a situation, e.g. 'I'm fine,' muttered Lionel as he tried to stem the flow of blood above his eye;
- stating opinions disguised as facts, e.g. It has been widely reported that . . .;
- quoting statistics, e.g. 75% of children surveyed . . .;
- choice of print size;
- font selection;
- choice of colour/s;
- including appropriate amount of detail;
- size of characters, tables or diagrams relative to others.

### ***Writing to Influence Social Issues***

As Transitional writers begin to develop an understanding that writers draw on their social and cultural lives to analyse and represent the world around them, they can be encouraged to write not only about topics that interest them, but also about social issues. Students should be encouraged to maintain involvement in issues that matter — or that bother or confuse them. As part of group social-action projects, students can be encouraged to create a range of texts such as posters, websites, letters to the editor, surveys, petitions and pamphlets.

### ***Discussing the Writer's World View***

Opportunities to discuss a writer's world view can be used to build Transitional writers' understanding of how one's knowledge, experiences and perspectives influence the creation of a text.

- What experiences have you drawn upon to create this text?
- What do you know about this topic?
- Why did you choose to represent . . . in . . . way?
- From whose point of view have you written the text? Why did you do this?
- From what other point of view could the text have been written? How would this change the text?
- How do you think your background has affected the way you wrote the text?

For further information about the Contextual Understanding aspect, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 2: Contextual Understanding.



# Involving Students

## 1 Interviewing



Participating in Interviewing supports Transitional writers in building information they can use when making decisions about how characters or people are represented.

Interviewing involves pairs role playing an interview situation. One student takes the role of a character or person, while the other asks the questions. The student role playing the character or person is required to respond orally to the questions. Students conducting the interviews need to create questions to find out about the character. It is important to model the types of questions that will help students focus on finding out details about the character or person's actions, feelings and behaviours.

Students would benefit from watching and analysing several interviews prior to this activity and then discussing the types of questions and answers that elicited the most information about the interviewees.

- Organise students in pairs. Have them develop a plan for creating a collaborative text. This plan should include a list of characters or people.
- Each pair selects a main character or person from their list.
- They work together to develop appropriate questions to elicit information about the chosen character or person. Questions might relate to likes, dislikes, fears, phobias, hobbies, habits, hopes, dreams, strengths and relationships.
- Provide time for the students to conduct their interview.
- Provide them with a format they can use to record decisions about how the character or person will be represented in their text.
- Provide time for them to write the text, incorporating the decisions made about the character or person.

First Steps, Second Edition		Writing Map of Development
Name:	Mox and Joel	
	Date: June 11 <sup>th</sup>	
<b>Interviewing</b>		
Character or Person: Dennis Hall		
Physical Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15 years old teenage boy - Very thin</li> <li>- red, curly hair</li> <li>- freckles</li> <li>- tall</li> </ul>	
Likes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sleeping in</li> <li>- catching up with friends</li> <li>- eating pasta</li> </ul>	
Dislikes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- having to clean his bedroom</li> <li>- being too thin</li> </ul>	
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- eldest of three boys</li> <li>- mother is an accountant</li> <li>- father is unemployed</li> </ul>	
Hobbies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- playing sport especially basketball</li> <li>- playing computer games</li> <li>- swimming</li> </ul>	
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- friendly</li> <li>- easy to get along with</li> </ul>	
Hopes and Dreams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to be a professional basketballer</li> </ul>	

**Figure 7.5**

## **2 Change the Point of View**

Change the Point of View provides students with the opportunity to discuss a text, identify the point of view from which it is written, and consider how it would change if written from a different point of view. Following discussions, students are encouraged to re-create texts or excerpts from a different point of view.

- After students read a text, discuss whose point of view is represented in it. Ask students to identify sections of the text that led them to their conclusions.
- Discuss with them whose point of view is not presented.
- Arrange students in small groups and have them discuss a particular event from a different point of view, e.g. that of another character, or a group not represented in the text.
- Have students write an account of the allocated event from the different point of view chosen.
- Invite several groups to share their writing, explaining aspects that needed modification.

## **3 Spot the Devices**

In Spot the Devices, writers hunt for words, expressions or images that have been used by an author or illustrator in an attempt to influence the reader. Newspapers, magazines, travel brochures and catalogues are ideal texts to use for this activity. Students can then be encouraged to create their own advertisements, newspaper reports, catalogues or magazine articles replicating the use of a range of devices.

- Select an extract from a known text. Have students hunt for and highlight words, expressions or images and speculate why they have been chosen to influence the reader.
- Use an overhead projector to highlight the particular words and phrases.
- Invite students to discuss the words, expressions or images, speculating about the author or illustrator's intent.
- Have them use the devices discovered to create a similar text.

## **4 Text Innovation**

Text Innovation is the name given to the process of adapting a text created by another author. By completing text-innovation activities with a contextual understanding focus, students can change the audience, change the setting, and adapt characters and their traits. Through these innovations students will develop an understanding of the devices used by authors and decisions they make when creating texts.



- Select a text for the innovation.
- Have students read the text several times.
- Select a feature that could be innovated upon. Innovations could involve:
  - changing the gender of one of the characters;
  - substituting characters for original characters, e.g. the main character becomes a child, an old man, an heiress or a journalist;
  - changing a character's trait/s, e.g. instead of a naughty child, have a well-behaved child;
  - changing the setting, e.g. from a city to a country area;
  - changing the time of the text, e.g. setting it in the future;
  - changing the dialogue between characters;
  - changing the sociocultural group, age, occupation, values or beliefs of the main character.
- Organise students in small groups to create the new text.
- Invite several groups to read their text innovation to the whole class.
- Have students compare the original text with new versions, justifying which they prefer, and why.
- Identify and discuss how the changes made affected the creation of the whole text.
  - If the nationality of a character changed, how was the language changed to suit?
  - If the beliefs of a character changed, was there any effect on the events?
  - When a character's sociocultural group was changed, how was the text changed?
  - What changes happened when the setting or time of the text was altered?

## 5 Imitate the Author



Imitate the Author provides opportunities for Transitional writers to examine a range of texts written by the same author. Students make generalisations about the devices used to influence audiences and then attempt to imitate the author's style in their own writing.

- After sharing a text, discuss different aspects of it. For literary texts, students could examine the language, style, theme or target audience. For informational texts, they could examine the word choice, the selection of details or the point of view presented.
- As more texts by this author are analysed, have students record observations on the format provided.

## Transitional Writing Phase

- Encourage them to discuss, compare and make generalisations about the author's style and the devices used.
- Challenge the students to write a paragraph imitating the style of this author.

First Steps: Second Edition  
Name: Sophie Flint  
Date: 10<sup>th</sup> Dec  
Writing Map of Development

Imitate the Author					
AUTHOR:	Lemony Snicket				
Text	Target Audience	Language	Theme	Style	Devices
The Bad Beginning	10-14 yr olds	Uses weird words and explains what they mean.	Tragic events of the three	Posh	Humour
The Reptile Room	10-14 yr olds		children who are all related to each other.	describes absolutely everything.	amount of detail
The Miserable Mill	10-14 yr olds				
The Crim Ghetto	10-14 yr olds			Unhappy events	
My paragraph using Lemony Snicket's style. If you have picked this book up in hopes that it will have happy events than you will need to reconsider your choice. This book only contains miserable events that happen to three young siblings.					

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Figure 7.6

## 6 Characters Come Alive

Refer to Chapter 6: Early Writing Phase, p. 159.

## 7 Buy, Buy, Buy!

Buy, Buy, Buy! involves the critical analysis of advertisements in order to determine the devices authors use to influence different audiences. Students make generalisations about them and then attempt to use similar devices when creating their own advertisement.

Prior to conducting this activity, have students collect a wide range of advertisements from different contexts, such as junk mail, newspapers and magazines.

- Create small groups and supply each group with three or four advertisements.
- Have each group discuss the advertisements individually and record the intended audience (considering age, gender and interest) and the devices used to attract the reader's attention.
- As a whole class, cluster the advertisements according to target audience, e.g. young children, males, fathers.



- Allocate a cluster to each group. Have students analyse the advertisements, record common devices used, and speculate why those devices have been chosen for that target audience.
- Have students individually select another product appropriate for their target audience and provide time for them to create an advertisement incorporating the devices discovered during their analysis.
- Have them share their new advertisement with the whole class and highlight the devices used.

## 8 Picture Clues

Picture Clues provides students with the opportunity to discover how their own knowledge, experiences and perspectives influence the creation of their texts. This activity involves students re-creating a written text based on only seeing the illustrations or diagrams.

- Have the students work in small groups.
- Allocate a copy of a selected text to each group, having first covered all words, leaving only pictures and diagrams visible. It is important that students have not previously read the text.
- Provide time for the groups to create the text for each page.
- Have each group read and compare their written pieces with other groups.
- Share the original text with the whole class.
- Provide time to discuss the similarities and differences in the texts, and the possible reasons why the differences exist.

## 9 Key Moments

Key Moments encourages students to use their own knowledge, experiences and perspectives to speculate on the thoughts of a character in a text. It invites students to focus on one character at a selected ‘key moment’ in the text and to write as if they were that character.

- Read — or have students read — a selected text.
- As a whole class, select one character from the text and identify key moments for that character.
- Select one of the key moments, e.g. Harry Potter finds out he is a wizard, and model ‘burst writing’. Burst writing is uninterrupted writing for two minutes, from the character’s perspective, at the selected key moment. This may involve thoughts, feelings, wishes, regrets, disappointments, plans and general reactions.
- Have students select another key moment from those identified and complete two minutes of burst writing.

## **Transitional Writing Phase**

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- Create a class book with the pieces of burst writing sorted under the key moments.

### *Extension*

Identify one key moment and have each student burst-write from different characters' perspectives. Discussions can centre on the different perspective each character has at that key moment.

## **10 Highlighting the Senses**

Refer to Chapter 6: Early Writing Phase, p 158.

## **11 You Be the Artist**

Refer to Chapter 6: Early Writing Phase, p. 158.

## **12 Writer's Notebook**

Refer to Chapter 8: Conventional Writing Phase, p. 252.

## **13 What's the Theme?**

Refer to Chapter 8: Conventional Writing Phase, p. 252.



# CONVENTIONS

## **Major Teaching Emphases**

- Provide opportunities for students to develop, refine and use new vocabulary.
- Continue to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. less common words, subject-specific words.
- Continue to build students' knowledge about words and word parts, e.g. prefixes, suffixes, homophones.
- Continue to build students' graphophonic knowledge, such as using less common sound–symbol relationships, e.g. ocean, nation, fashion.
- Extend students' knowledge of the use of punctuation, e.g. apostrophes, quotation marks.
- Extend students' knowledge and use of parts of speech and their relationships, e.g. noun–pronoun agreement.
- Teach students to construct and manipulate a variety of sentences, e.g. using conjunctions, using phrases and clauses.
- Teach students how to group sentences about similar information together to form a paragraph.
- Continue to build knowledge of different text forms, emphasising:
  - purpose, e.g. explanations explain phenomena
  - text structure, e.g. explanations use cause and effect
  - text organisation, e.g. explanations include diagrams or cutaways
  - language features, e.g. explanations use signal words to show cause/effect.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for supporting Transitional writers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.

- Building Vocabulary
- Building Word Knowledge
- Building Graphophonic Knowledge
- Understanding Conventions of Grammar
- Building Text-Form Knowledge

## ***Building Vocabulary***

All students, when they arrive at school, already have an oral vocabulary based on the speech variety and experiences at home. Research has shown that vocabulary acquisition is crucial to academic development (Baker, Simmons & Kameenui 1998), so it is important for teachers to ensure Transitional writers have every opportunity to expand their vocabulary across a broad range of contexts and experiences.

### ***Developing Vocabulary***

Reading provides models of rich language that help students to learn many new words, and writing provides authentic contexts for them to use those words and develop ownership of them.

Transitional writers can be supported in developing their vocabulary in the following ways.

- Modelling the use of language in different contexts.
- Introducing subject-specific vocabulary across the curriculum, e.g. the language of science and technology.
- Valuing existing speech variety if non-standard or in an additional language or dialect.
- Providing experiences through activities outside the classroom e.g. trips or excursions, and activities inside the classroom, e.g. manipulating materials, inviting guest speakers or capitalising on any impromptu events.
- Discussing written words at every opportunity, pointing out the author's choice and why it is the 'best fit' in the context.
- Involving students in meaningful problem-solving activities, word games and investigations.
- Jointly constructing Word Walls featuring the words students are learning.
- Providing opportunities for students to read and write for a range of purposes.
- Immersing students in a range of texts.
- Using a rich vocabulary in all contexts.
- Developing language across all learning areas, e.g. music.

### ***Building a Bank of Words That Are Automatically Spelt and Used***

At all phases of development students copy, recall and have-a-go at spelling words during independent writing. The bank of words that can be automatically spelt and used can be made up of high-frequency words, personally significant words, topic or theme words, or signal words.



Exploring and using these words in reading, writing and any across-curriculum activities will help to reinforce their recognition and use. For some students, ongoing systematic instruction is essential to help them develop automaticity; for others, the repeated reading and writing of texts helps them develop the ability to spell a bank of words automatically.

In this phase, it is important to build on the bank of words that students already know. For Transitional writers, include the following.

#### *High-frequency words*

These occur frequently in written texts; sources include *Five Hundred Words Most Frequently Used in Children's Writing* (Gentry & Gillet 1993), *One Hundred High Frequency Words* (Fountas & Pinnell 1998) and *One Hundred Most Frequent Words in Writing* (Routman 2000).

#### *Personally significant words*

These are words significant to a student personally, e.g. words associated with an interest or hobby.

#### *Topic or theme words*

These words are related to topics, themes or subject areas being studied, such as:

- English, e.g. journal, audience, argument, debate;
- Mathematics, e.g. volume, length, position, calculate;
- Science, e.g. mammal, experiment, carnivore;
- Health and Physical Education, e.g. healthy, behaviour, responsibility;
- Technology, e.g. systems, investigate, technology, material;
- Society and Environment, e.g. environment, resources, elements, ecology.

#### *Signal words*

These are associated with text forms and text structures, and signal the relationships between ideas in the text, e.g. therefore, before, although, because.

At this phase students can take responsibility for keeping a spelling journal to record words they already know and words they wish to learn. The use of Have-a-Go Pads will encourage writers to generate alternative spellings to unknown words.

## ***Building Word Knowledge***

As students' understanding of graphophonics expands, it is essential to extend their knowledge of words, word parts and how words

work. It is important to build their word awareness through experiences such as discovering generalisations, participating in open-ended activities and playing with words.

The following list may provide a focus for supporting Transitional writers.

- Suffixes, e.g. ing, ed
- Prefixes, e.g. un, dis
- Plural endings, e.g. s, es, ies
- Homophones, e.g. their, there
- Contractions, e.g. wasn't, don't
- Compound words, e.g. breakfast

### ***Building Graphophonic Knowledge***

Graphophonic knowledge is the understanding of sound–symbol relationships as they apply to the alphabetic principle of written language.

Transitional writers will draw on their knowledge of the different sound–symbol representations when attempting to spell unknown words or to proofread their writing. The focus for Transitional writers is on the following graphophonic understandings using less common letter patterns.

- One sound can be represented with different letters or letter combinations, e.g. ocean, nation, fashion.
- Different sounds can be represented with the same letters or letter combinations, e.g. obedient, soldier, society.

### ***Understanding Conventions of Grammar***

At all phases of development it is important to draw attention to the conventions of grammar used in a range of texts. This includes conventions associated with punctuation, parts of language, sentence structure and overall text construction. It is important that these conventions are introduced, revisited, and practised in meaningful contexts. Modelled and Shared Reading and Writing provide a springboard for exploring many of them.

### ***Punctuation and Parts of Speech***

It is beneficial for Transitional writers to be able to use, talk about and understand the following aspects:

- punctuation, e.g. commas, hyphens, brackets, quotation marks;
- the function and relationship of parts of speech, e.g. prepositions; present, past and future tense; active and passive verbs.



## **Constructing Sentences**

Students in this phase continue to benefit from knowing how to construct and manipulate a variety of sentences, including statements, questions, commands or exclamations. Transitional writers can be encouraged to create both simple and compound sentences.

- Sentences can be joined to add variety and make the text flow.
- The order of phrases and clauses in sentences can be varied to make writing interesting.
- The length of sentences helps to create specific effects, e.g. short sentences for excitement.

## **Forming Paragraphs**

Paragraphs are the basic unit of organisation in writing. A paragraph includes a number of sentences that contain related information.

Students in this phase benefit from continued modelling and support in how to group together sentences about similar things.

Transitional writers will benefit from a focus on developing and refining their understanding of the following characteristics of paragraphs.

- Paragraphs have a topic sentence that concisely states the key point.
- The sentences that follow the topic sentence are called supporting sentences and contain facts, details or examples that expand on the topic or give a little more information.
- Paragraphs may have a closing sentence that reiterates the main point.

## **Building Text-Form Knowledge**

Building students' knowledge about text forms assists them to successfully construct a range of texts and to understand the purpose, structure and organisation of those texts. Students benefit from reading different examples of the same text form, making comparisons and identifying defining features.

Modelled, Shared and Guided Reading and Writing sessions provide an opportunity for Transitional writers to discuss and extend their knowledge about the conventions of the structure, organisation and language features of a range of text forms. These sessions can also include a focus on texts that 'break the rules' to achieve a specific purpose or to enhance impact; for example, a literary text may be used to persuade, or a procedural text to entertain.

Knowledge about text forms includes understanding the purpose, audience, text organisation, text structure and language features of a particular form.

### **Purpose**

All texts are written and read for a reason. The purpose may be to entertain, as in most literary texts, or to explain, describe or inquire, as in some informational texts. Understanding the purpose of a writing event will assist students to make decisions about text organisation and structure, and the language used.

Students need to be exposed to a range of texts written for a variety of purposes. Transitional writers should be encouraged to create texts for a range of purposes. For a list of forms related to purposes, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 1.

### **Text Organisation**

Text organisation refers to the way a text is organised — the layout. Transitional writers will benefit from understanding text-form frameworks; for example, a narrative may include orientation, conflict and resolution.

Transitional writers can be introduced to the function, terminology and use of a range of organisational features, such as:

- headings and subheadings;
- captions;
- diagrams and other visual aids (photographs, graphs, tables, cross-sections);
- tables of contents and indexes;
- glossaries;
- paragraphs;
- hyperlinks.

It is important to encourage Transitional writers to use appropriate organisational features in their own texts. For a list of further organisational features in different texts, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 1.

### **Text Structure**

Text Structure refers to the way ideas, feelings or information are linked within a text. These could include:

- problem and solution
- compare and contrast
- cause and effect
- listing: logical or chronological sequence, collection of details.



Transitional writers will benefit from being exposed to a variety of text forms that use different text structures. Encourage writers to use a variety of structures in their own texts.

## **Language Features**

The term 'language features' refers to the type of vocabulary and grammar used in a text. Each text form has specific language features that are appropriate to it; for example, an explanation may include the following features:

- generalised participants, e.g. volcanoes, cyclones;
- mainly action verbs, e.g. falls, rises, erupts;
- some passive verbs, e.g. is saturated, was caused;
- timeless present tense, e.g. are, happens, turns;
- signal words to show time, e.g. finally, following.

Students can be introduced to appropriate language features in the context of learning about new forms of writing. For a detailed description of language features linked to text forms, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 1.

For further information about the Conventions aspect, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn:

- Chapter 3: Conventions
- Chapter 1: Use of Texts.

## **Involving Students**

### **1 Word Cline**



A Word Cline helps students to build, refine and use new vocabulary as they generate synonyms and discuss connotations and nuances of meaning. They generate words with similar meaning and arrange them to show a graduating intensity, according to a given criterion.

- Select a relevant key word e.g. family. It is important for students to be able to generate at least four synonyms for the chosen key word.
- Have students generate synonyms (or words that are closely related) for the key word, e.g. relatives, kin, people, folks, ancestors, relations.
- Invite students to arrange the words in rising intensity against a criterion such as distant relationship to close relationship.
- Organise students in small groups to discuss the words and reach a consensus about the order of the arrangement.

- Have them reflect on the factors that influenced the choice of placement.
- As a whole class, discuss how the use of the different words from the Word Cline could impact on writing.
- Provide time for students to review a selected piece of their own writing and identify vocabulary that could be replaced with more specific words.

## **2 Words, Words, Words**

Participating in this activity helps Transitional writers to identify different parts of speech — such as adjectives, nouns and verbs — in sentences, and the role each plays in writing. This involves students in analysing text and making generalisations about the use of a selected part of speech.

- Highlight a selected part of speech in a chosen text, e.g. all the adjectives.
- Have students read the text and discuss, in small groups, the function of the highlighted words.
- Encourage them to explore the position of the highlighted word or words in each sentence.
- Provide time for them to create a definition of the selected part of speech.
- Have them share their definitions with the class and come to consensus on a class definition. Ensure that the vocabulary used by the students forms part of the definition.
- Include some examples on a collaboratively created class chart.
- Encourage students to use the selected part of speech in their own writing.

## **3 Secret Messages**

Refer to Chapter 6: Early Writing Phase, p. 168.

## **4 What Comes Next?**

Refer to Chapter 6: Early Writing Phase, p. 169.

## **5 Sound Hunter**

Refer to Chapter 6: Early Writing Phase, p. 169.

## **6 Word Stems**

Word Stems involves students in investigating how words are related by examining the meaning of common parts. Having knowledge of word stems helps students to build vocabulary and to use knowledge of meaning when attempting to spell unknown words.



- Select a word from a current classroom context and highlight the word stem, e.g. telephone.
- Discuss the meaning of the word, referring back to the text.
- Ask students to brainstorm any other words that have the same word stem. List the words and their meanings, e.g. telescope — an instrument for looking at distant objects; television — an object that shows images of distant objects or events; telephoto lens — a lens that is able to take shots of distant objects.
- Have students infer the meaning of the word stem from the collected definitions.
- Record the words and their meaning on a class chart.
- Challenge students to continue to search for other words with the same stem.

## 7 Word Observations

Word Observations (Brand 2004) encourages students to look closely at a range of features of selected words. Observing words and sharing discoveries helps Transitional writers to make spelling generalisations and refine their vocabulary.

- Select a class word to observe, e.g. environment.
- Demonstrate the spelling of the word. Have students record it.
- Provide time for students to individually observe the word and record any features in it that are meaningful to them.
- Invite them to share observations with the whole class. Record and discuss all observations.
- As students become more familiar with Word Observations, time can be provided each day for them to record observations about self-selected words.
- Create a class chart that lists the types of observations that can be made about words.

**Environment**

- Four syllables
- Ends in 'ment'
- Eleven letter word
- Has the word 'ron' in the middle.

**Observing Words**

- What part of speech is it?
- Does the word have a base or root word?
- How many syllables?
- How many letters?
- Any particular letter patterns?
- Is it a compound word?

Figure 7.7

## **8 Word Challenge**

Word Challenge is designed to help students build their vocabulary and use new words in meaningful contexts. It involves a student presenting a word of the day to the class; the word of the day is explained and used in a sentence by the student setting the challenge. Other students are then challenged to spell the word.

- Provide time for the selected student to present the new word and the challenge to the class. Ensure that the meaning of the word is explained. If a word has more than one meaning, these must be presented.
- Provide time for students to have-a-go at spelling the new word.
- Discuss the strategies used to spell the word; e.g. breaking the word into parts; using knowledge of what sounds are represented by what letters; noting the position of sounds in the word; noting small words in bigger words, and knowing words with similar meanings.
- Record the class consensus spelling of the word.
- Invite the selected student to check the class spelling of the word, highlighting correct and incorrect features.
- Encourage all students to attempt to use the new word at least three times during the day, either orally or in writing.
- The new word can be added to a Word Wall.

## **9 Base Words Plus**

Base Words Plus is an open-ended activity that provides students with an opportunity to work at their own level to create and investigate the spelling of new words. Transitional writers enjoy the challenge of creating as many words as possible by adding prefixes and suffixes to a given base word.

- Provide students with a focus base word and a selection of prefixes and suffixes.
- Provide guidelines for the creation of words, e.g. all words must include the base word; the last letter of the base word may be changed or deleted when adding suffixes; all words must be real words.
- Challenge students to make as many new words as possible in a given time by adding prefixes or suffixes (or both) to the base word.
- Provide time for students to share their words and reflect upon the lists of words created. Have them investigate the meaning of the new words and their relationship to the base word.
- Encourage students to search for other words that use the base word.
- Share spelling discoveries made about adding prefixes or suffixes to a focus base word.



## 10 Vocabulary Squares

Creating Vocabulary Squares (Burke 2000) helps writers further develop their understanding of the spelling of selected words used in their writing. In this activity students collect and complete a Vocabulary Square that involves recording information about a chosen word.

- Provide students with a Vocabulary Square format.
- Provide time for each student to select a word for the Vocabulary Square. The word chosen should be one that the student has difficulty remembering how to spell.
- The student then records the selected word in the centre square and completes each section.
- Encourage students to share discoveries with a partner.

First Steps: Second Edition	
Name: <i>Lonise</i>	Writing Map of Development Date: <i>April 11th</i>
<b>Vocabulary Squares</b>	
<b>Definition</b> <i>Preservation and protection of something</i>	<b>Words created by Adding Prefixes and/or Suffixes</b> <i>conserving</i> <i>conservationist</i>
<b>Root/Part of Speech</b> <i>noun</i> <i>conserve</i>	<b>conservation</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Picture to Remind Me 	
<small>© Western Australian Minister for Education.</small>	
<small>MAY BE COPIED FOR CLASSROOM USE ONLY</small>	

Figure 7.8

## 11 Sentence Reduction

Sentence Reduction helps students create concise sentences that do not contain irrelevant details. In this activity, students are challenged to see if they can take away parts of a sentence without losing meaning or important information.

- Provide students with a sentence containing superfluous information and multiple details. Write each word of the sentence on a separate card and place the cards in a sentence maker.
- Have students read the sentence and select one word or phrase at a time to be removed.
- Ensure that the sentence is read in its entirety after each word or phrase is removed, to check for meaning.
- Challenge students to reduce the sentence to the smallest possible unit.
- Repeat this process with additional sentences.
- Provide time for students to identify and refine sentences in their own writing that need reduction, and to share the refinements with others.

## 12 Sentence Transformation

Students will benefit from activities in which they transform sentences. It is most appropriate to focus on one type of transformation at a time. They can be challenged to do this in a range of ways.

- Changing words from singular to plural (or vice versa).
  - Kate is eating an orange.
  - Kate and Simon are eating oranges.
- Changing the tense of the sentence to present, past or future.
  - I am going for a swim.
  - I went for a swim.
  - I will go for a swim.
- Changing a statement to a question.
  - Morning tea is at 10.30.
  - Is morning tea at 10.30?
- Making an affirmative statement negative.
  - I'll drive my car tomorrow.
  - I won't drive my car tomorrow.

## 13 Alliterative Sentences

Alliterative Sentences involves students in constructing and manipulating sentences. It is an excellent activity to help them expand their vocabulary and spell new words. The students work in groups: each group writes the first word of a sentence, then passes it on to other groups who in turn add other words. The challenge of Alliterative Sentences is to see how many words in the sentence can start with the same letter.

- Divide the class into small groups. Give each group an envelope and a number of blank cards.
- Ask each group to record on a card a noun (singular or plural) that represents a person or an animal, e.g. **skydiver**, **crocodiles**.
- Direct each group to put their card in the envelope and pass it to the next group.
- Have each group read the new card and add another word that will make a complete sentence, e.g. **Crocodiles creep**.
- The two words are then put back in the envelope and passed on.
- The next group read the new sentence and add another word to make a different sentence. e.g. **Colourful crocodiles creep**.
- Continue this process, with each group adding words or phrases to create new sentences.
- When the envelope returns to the original group, provide time to share the final sentence, e.g. **Colourful crocodiles creep crazily up the cliff constantly**.
- Discuss the parts of speech contained in each sentence.



## 14 Changing the Meaning

It is beneficial to provide Transitional writers with opportunities to explore the effect of different conjunctions in sentences. Changing the Meaning helps students to be able to select the most appropriate conjunctions in their own writing.

- Provide students with a sentence stem, e.g. **The terrified child rolled down the hill . . .**
- Brainstorm a list of conjunctions that could be used as a linking word to complete the sentence, e.g. because, when, after, while, but.
- Record sentences suggested by students, e.g. **The terrified child rolled down the hill while her mother stood at the top and screamed.**
- Discuss the effect the conjunction had on the meaning of the sentence.
- Provide a new sentence stem and invite small groups to brainstorm conjunctions.
- Provide time for groups to create sentences using each of the conjunctions.

## 15 Scrambled Paragraph

Completing this activity provides students with the opportunity to reconstruct a paragraph that has been cut into sentences. Students are required to use their knowledge of a topic sentence and supporting detail to rearrange the sentences into a cohesive paragraph.

- Provide small groups with envelopes each containing a paragraph cut into separate sentences.
- Have students work together to reorganise the sentences into a cohesive paragraph.
- Let each group share and compare with others. Have students provide reasons for their organisation and for the sequence of sentences.
- Discuss the text clues that assisted them with the task, e.g. topic sentence, supporting detail, closing summary.

## 16 Writing a Hamburger

Writing a Hamburger is a way to focus students on the information contained in a paragraph. In this activity, students create topic and concluding sentences for chosen paragraphs.

- Locate five paragraphs in familiar texts. Remove the topic and concluding sentence from each one; the remaining text forms the middle of the hamburger.

- Explain the concept behind Writing a Hamburger. The top part of the bun is the place for the topic sentence and the bottom of the bun is the sentence that concludes the paragraph. In between the two is the meat, being the body of the paragraph.
- Have students work in pairs to write the topic and concluding sentences for each hamburger.
- Invite students to share their paragraphs.
- Highlight examples of effective topic and concluding sentences created by the students.

## **17 Generic Games**

Refer to Chapter 6: Early Writing Phase, pp. 175 to 180.



# PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. world knowledge, linguistic features.
- Continue to teach strategies used throughout the writing process, e.g. synthesising.
- Continue to teach spelling strategies, e.g. using analogy.
- Continue to teach students to plan for writing in a variety of ways, e.g. graphic organisers, storyboards.
- Continue to teach students how to use proofreading, editing and revising to refine their writing.
- Encourage students to select and use publishing formats that best suit purpose and audience, e.g. webpage, slide show, poster.
- Continue to teach students to find, record and organise information from texts, e.g. using graphic organisers.
- Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.

## Organisation of the Processes and Strategies Aspect

There are several differences in the organisation of the Processes and Strategies aspect. Both the Teaching Notes and the Teaching and Learning Experiences (Involving Students) are located in *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

The rationale for these differences is that the processes and strategies of spelling and writing are not conceptually hierarchical and therefore not phase-specific. In all phases, a variety of writing processes and strategies need to be introduced, developed and consolidated.

What varies from one phase to the next is the growth in:

- the number and integration of strategies used throughout the processes of writing;
- the awareness and monitoring of writing processes;
- the efficiency in use of the processes of writing;
- the ability to articulate the use of the strategies used in the processes of writing;
- the awareness of how the use of processes helps with composing texts.

# Supporting Parents of Transitional Writers

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF TRANSITIONAL WRITERS

Transitional writers are able to write a variety of texts such as explanations, narratives and brochures. They consider the purpose and the audience when making decisions about what to include. Transitional writers are developing control over spelling, punctuation, and the way texts are organised. They are beginning to use a range of strategies to spell unknown words.

### Supporting Transitional Writers in the Home

Transitional writers will benefit from a range of experiences in the home setting. Ideas for providing appropriate experiences are available on Parent Cards located on the *First Steps* Writing CD-ROM. Teachers can select appropriate cards for each Transitional writer and copy them for parents to use at home.

#### Parent Cards

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>1</b> General Description and How to Support Transitional Writers<br><b>2</b> Writing and Reading Links<br><b>3</b> Supporting the Writing Process<br><b>4</b> Supporting Punctuation and Grammar<br><b>5</b> Building Understandings about Different Types of Writing | <b>6</b> Developing Vocabulary and Spelling<br><b>7</b> Building Vocabulary and Spelling Knowledge through Games<br><b>8</b> Supporting Project Work — Accessing and Using Information |
|---|--|



Also available on the Writing CD-ROM is a parent-friendly version of the Writing Map of Development.

## CHAPTER 8

# Conventional Writing Phase

*Fruit and Vegie Heaven*

As part of fruit and vegetable week our class made delicious salad rolls, divine fruit salads and juices, slushys and smoothies that were out of this world!!! This is what I thought of them.

When my lips touched the zingy taste of lemons, limes and oranges it was like I had been asleep and someone had just woken me up. As the electric yellow liquid went into my mouth and down my throat I could feel the flavours exploding inside me. It made me want more!!!

As the berry drink went down my throat I could feel it twisting and twirling inside me. It was like eating runny ice cream. It was extremely cold but I couldn't put it down it was too delicious. I felt like I could of exploded into a million pieces.

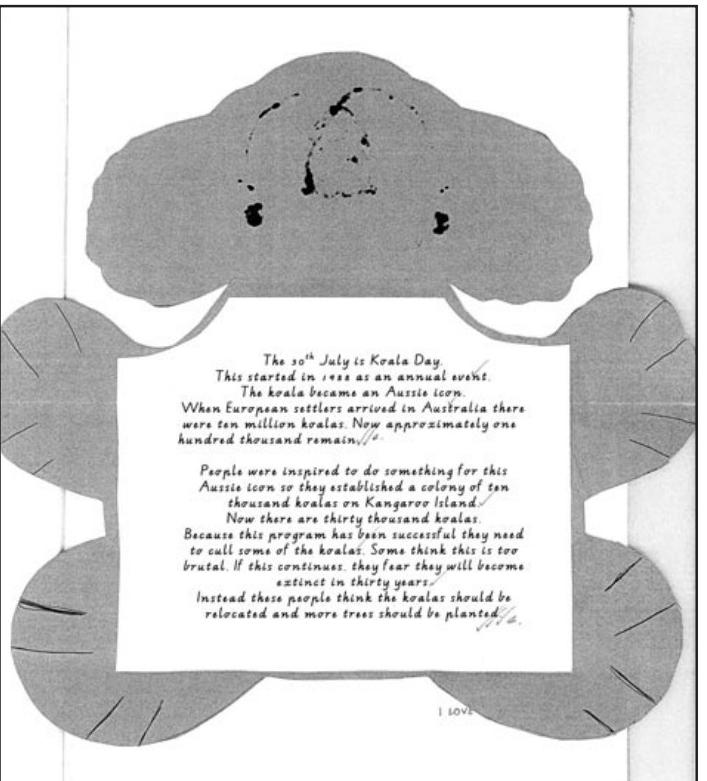
As we were chopping the vegetables I could feel and smell all the flavours filling up inside me. All the colours, all the textures were just amazing. Red, yellow, green, orange, marmo-red. Soft, hard, prickly, rough, smooth, bumpy. It was so tempting just to eat all of it!!!

The vegies were basically the same, all the different shapes and sizes. Long, short, big, small, round, pear shaped. So bright, so different.

I think my favourite part was when Mrs Gibson was blending the juices, slushies and smoothies. All the smells and colours just blew me away! I think no one knows that in these delicious circumstances you are about to be impatient! I felt like I was being tortured having to wait there watching all flavours explode in the blender, not being able to just drink it straight away. The juices getting pushed and pulled running down the sides mixing in what turned out to be a very delicious drink!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



Hannah Tarrant



The 30<sup>th</sup> July is Koala Day.  
This started in 1988 as an annual event.  
The koala became an Aussie icon.  
When European settlers arrived in Australia there  
were ten million koalas. Now approximately one  
hundred thousand remain.

People were inspired to do something for this  
Aussie icon so they established a colony of ten  
thousand koalas on Kangaroo Island.  
Now there are thirty thousand koalas.  
Because this program has been successful they need  
to cull some of the koalas. Some think this is too  
brutal. If this continues, they fear they will become  
extinct in thirty years.  
Instead these people think the koalas should be  
relocated and more trees should be planted.

I LOVE

Figure 8.1

## Global Statement

Conventional writers demonstrate control over the conventions of writing and most components of the writing process. While composing, they take responsibility for adjusting the language and content to suit specific audiences and purposes. Conventional writers craft a variety of literary and informational texts, such as biographies, web pages and documentary scripts. In this phase, writers use an increasing bank of known words and select from a wide vocabulary. They integrate a range of strategies to spell unknown words.

# Conventional Writing Indicators

## Use of Texts

- ◆ Crafts a wide range of texts, demonstrating control over all elements.
- ◆ Composes texts by retrieving, recording and organising information appropriate to purpose and audience.
- Demonstrates an ability to develop a topic.
- Demonstrates knowledge of differences in organisation, structure and language features of a range of texts when writing.
- Is developing a personal style of writing.
- Has sufficient ideas to fulfil selected writing tasks.
- Experiments with adaptations of standard text forms.
- Generates, explores and fully develops topics and ideas.
- Writes to express creativity.
- Shows evidence of strong personal voice.
- Uses the metalanguage associated with writing, e.g. structure, function, device.

## Contextual Understanding

- ◆ Explains why a particular text form may be more appropriate to achieve a purpose for an intended audience.
- ◆ Adjusts the language and ideas to include in own texts to suit purpose and audience.
- ◆ Selects ways to represent characters and events to create specific effects in literary texts.
- ◆ Selects ways to represent people and ideas to create specific effects in informational texts.
- ◆ Uses devices when attempting to influence the reader, e.g. flattery, humour.
- Subverts stereotypical representations of characters and people in own texts.
- Identifies likely audience and adjusts writing to achieve impact.
- Attempts to involve the reader by the use of devices that require commitment from the reader, e.g. use of imagery, metaphors.
- Expresses a well-reasoned point of view in writing.
- Provides more than an exclusively personal perspective in informational texts.
- Experiments with designing a text for one audience and then altering it for another.

## Conventions

- ◆ Selects vocabulary to create precise meaning.
- ◆ Spells and uses a large bank of known words correctly.
- ◆ Knows and uses less common letter patterns correctly, e.g. aisle, reign.
- ◆ Writes a variety of simple, compound and complex sentences using correct punctuation.
- ◆ Develops a paragraph by writing a topic sentence and including supporting information.
- Includes specific vocabulary to enhance meaning.
- Uses vocabulary to suit the intended audience and purpose.

- Uses a range of conjunctions appropriate to the text form, e.g. the use of however, therefore, moreover when writing persuasive texts.
- Writes effectively in both first and third person.
- Uses dialogue effectively in texts.
- Maintains appropriate tense throughout texts.
- Accurately uses less common punctuation marks, e.g. hyphen, colon, ellipsis.
- Organises paragraphs logically.
- Is aware of a writer's obligations to readers in the area of spelling.

## Processes and Strategies

- ◆ Draws upon semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge when writing, e.g. world and cultural knowledge, linguistic features.
- ◆ Selects appropriate strategies to use throughout the writing process.
- ◆ Selects appropriate strategies to spell unknown words.
- ◆ Plans for writing in a range of ways, e.g. graphic organisers, storyboard.
- ◆ Independently proofreads, edits and revises own writing.
- ◆ Selects appropriate publication formats to enhance audience understanding and impact.
- Applies spelling generalisations, and is able to apply them to new situations, e.g. rules for adding suffixes, selection of appropriate letter patterns (ion).
- Recognises and uses word origins to make meaningful associations.
- Uses knowledge of word meanings to spell unknown words.
- Spells inflectional endings conventionally.
- Recognises most misspelt words and attempts corrections.
- Plans writing through discussion with others and by making notes and lists, or drawing diagrams.
- Uses a variety of drafting techniques, e.g. cutting and pasting, using arrows and carets.
- Refines text during writing.
- Works to clarify meaning before continuing with writing.
- Transforms, expands, reduces and rearranges sentences to achieve an intended meaning.
- Chooses appropriate combinations of written text, image and colour to publish texts.
- Applies knowledge of copyright regulations when composing texts.

*Note The terms 'write' and 'writing' encompass the use of traditional tools, such as pen and paper, as well as the use of electronic tools such as computers or mobile phones.*

*The term 'texts' refers to both literary and informational texts, and includes visual, spoken or written texts. These may be printed, electronic, live or multimodal.*



# Major Teaching Emphases

## Environment and Attitude (see p. 230)

- Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.
- Foster students' enjoyment of writing.
- Encourage students to experiment with difficult facets of writing, e.g. manipulating forms, use of devices.
- Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.

## Use of Texts (see p. 234)

- Continue to expose students to a range of text forms, and discuss the features of each.
- Provide opportunities for students to craft a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Encourage students to experiment with the manipulation of elements to compose a text.
- Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with writing, and encourage its use.
- Adjustments to match overview condensing.

## Contextual Understanding (see p. 243)

- Provide opportunities for students to explain their choice of:
  - text
  - information and ideas included or omitted
  - devices used.
- Encourage students to represent characters and events to create specific effects in literary texts.
- Encourage students to represent people and ideas to create specific effects in informational texts.
- Encourage students to select devices to influence a particular audience.
- Encourage students to use writing to influence change about social issues that concern them.
- Continue to discuss how writers' and readers' knowledge, experiences and perspective affect the composition and interpretation of texts.

## Conventions (see p. 253)

- Provide opportunities for students to develop, refine and use new vocabulary.
- Continue to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. technical terms.
- Continue to build students' knowledge about words and word parts, e.g. derivatives and word origins.
- Extend students' knowledge of the use of punctuation, e.g. colons, hyphens.
- Extend students' knowledge and use of parts of speech and their relationships, e.g. active and passive verbs.
- Continue to teach students to construct and manipulate a variety of sentences.
- Teach students different ways to develop cohesive paragraphs.
- Continue to build knowledge of different text forms.
- Build knowledge of texts where combinations and adaptations of text structure and organisation have been used.

## Processes and Strategies (see p. 264)

- Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. orthographic knowledge, cultural knowledge.
- Continue to teach strategies used throughout the writing process.
- Consolidate known spelling strategies.
- Encourage students to discuss the effectiveness of various ways they plan for writing.
- Encourage students to use proofreading, editing and revising to refine their writing.
- Continue to encourage students to select and use publishing formats that best suit purpose and audience, e.g. website, video, portfolio.
- Encourage students to evaluate their effectiveness in retrieving, recording and organising information from texts and to critique own texts.
- Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.

# Teaching and Learning Experiences

## ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE

### ***Major Teaching Emphases***

- Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.
- Foster students' enjoyment of writing.
- Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. manipulating forms, use of devices.
- Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.

## Teaching Notes

Conventional writers benefit from an environment in which they feel supported, challenged and engaged in meaningful writing situations. It is important to provide a variety of contexts for writing that will help extend students' knowledge of a wide range of text forms. Conventional writers need to be encouraged to solve problems, evaluate their own work and take responsibility for improving their own writing. The focus for developing positive attitudes towards writing as well as a supportive environment for Conventional writers is organised under the following headings.

- Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment
- Fostering Enjoyment of Writing
- Encouraging Experimentation
- Writing as a Social Practice

### ***Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment***

A supportive environment is one in which both the physical aspects and the culture of the classroom are considered. A positive classroom climate is one in which students have opportunities to use and combine printed, spoken, visual and digital processes. These opportunities contribute to students' willingness and eagerness to write.



## Physical Environment

Continuing to create a print-rich environment is important for Conventional writers. Print should be created by — or in consultation with — the students in order to foster ownership and use. This print can be developed according to student and classroom needs. Owocki (1999) classifies print in the following ways.

- *Environmental* — print that gives information about the world, e.g. almanacs, directories, reference books.
- *Occupational* — print associated with one's job, e.g. print for an accountant could include policy manuals, order forms, accounts, taxation returns.
- *Informational* — print for storing, retrieving and organising information, e.g. a flow chart explaining manufacturing from raw materials to final products.
- *Recreational* — print for leisure activities, e.g. manuals, periodicals, text messages.

Conventional writers need to be encouraged to use classroom print as a resource when creating their own texts. Modelled, Shared, Interactive and Guided Writing sessions present ideal opportunities to demonstrate how to use print from the environment to support writing.

## Classroom Culture

As well as providing appropriate materials and a carefully planned physical environment, it is important to also consider how to create a positive classroom writing culture.

Develop such a culture for Conventional writers in any of the following ways.

- Encourage students to write for genuine purposes and audiences.
- Have high expectations of students and ensure they know what these are.
- Provide opportunities for students to select their own topics, ways to plan, and publishing formats.
- Provide a range of ICT resources for use in creating texts.
- Encourage students to take responsibility for refining their own writing.
- Allow time for students to share their writing with others.
- Value writing, and demonstrate this attitude to students.
- Establish, teach and reinforce procedures for solving challenges during writing.
- Provide opportunities for students to evaluate their own work and discuss the judgements they have made.
- Incorporate purposeful writing into all learning areas.

## ***Fostering Enjoyment of Writing***

It is important for Conventional writers to see writing as a purposeful and worthwhile social practice. Take every opportunity to foster students' enjoyment of writing in the following ways.

- Provide opportunities for daily independent writing on topics of personal choice.
- Provide authentic writing experiences that have a clear purpose and a real audience.
- Provide opportunities for students to use a range of ICT resources combining print, images and sound, e.g. computers, software programs, interactive whiteboards, digital cameras, tape and video recorders, scanners, photocopiers.
- Read aloud daily to enable students to appreciate patterns, rhythms and nuances of language.
- Provide multiple demonstrations of the strategies effective writers use.
- Provide ongoing opportunities for students to be involved in focused conversations about writing.
- Provide time to share books by favourite authors. Discuss how these authors are able to attract and hold the attention of the reader.
- Expose students to a range of quality informational and literary texts.
- Discuss the types and features of texts from across curriculum areas.
- Involve students in setting their own writing goals.
- Encourage the extension of vocabulary through playing with words.
- Provide ongoing, targeted feedback and encouragement.
- Encourage students to publish their work on-line, e.g. <http://english.unitecology.ac.nz/writers/home.html>
- Organise visits by authors to speak about their texts.
- Encourage and organise participation in writing competitions when appropriate.
- Develop a buddy system with another class in the school. Have buddies share their writing and provide feedback to each other.
- Have a range of software packages available for students to use, e.g. Claris Works, Story Weaver Deluxe, PrintShop Deluxe.

## ***Encouraging Experimentation***

Conventional writers should be encouraged to reflect on ways to improve in selected focus areas and to experiment with all aspects of writing.



This can be done by inviting students to:

- extend the diversity of texts they write for real purposes;
- have-a-go at manipulating elements of texts according to purpose;
- use a variety of strategies throughout the writing process;
- explore issues from perspectives other than their own;
- use a multistrategy approach to spell unknown words;
- investigate words and their meanings;
- extend their vocabulary;
- critically analyse their own writing;
- discuss writing strategies and reflect on their effectiveness;
- experiment with technology to create multimodal texts, e.g. adding images and audio files;
- experiment with colour, font size, style, animation and special effects when using presentation software packages.

### ***Writing as a Social Practice***

The focus when teaching writing in the classroom is to provide many real-world situations that require the use of written language. The ultimate goal is for students to function in society as literate individuals who can use writing to communicate their ideas, share information, stimulate thinking, formulate questions and influence policy and action.

Continue to provide opportunities where Conventional writers use writing for real reasons, and help them to develop the understanding that writing has the power to influence others; for example, writing minutes of meetings, speeches for school events and 'letters to the editor' can help students understand some of the functions that writing can serve.

For further information about Environment and Attitude, see *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning*, Chapter 5: Establishing a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment.

# USE OF TEXTS

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Continue to expose students to a range of text forms, and discuss the features of each.
- Provide opportunities for students to craft a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Encourage students to experiment with the manipulation of elements to compose a text.
- Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with writing, and encourage its use.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for helping Conventional writers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.

- Exposure to a Range of Text Forms
- Opportunities to Craft a Range of Texts
- Crafting Personal Voice and Individual Style
- Using Metalanguage

### ***Exposure to a Range of Text Forms***

Conventional writers will continue to benefit from ongoing opportunities to read, re-read, interact with and discuss a variety of increasingly sophisticated literary and informational texts. These texts may come from across-curriculum areas, popular culture, the Internet or the community. They could be multimodal, class-made, or published materials presented in a range of formats.

During writing sessions, continue to discuss with students how successful writers craft a range of text forms for different purposes. Highlight how authors create texts:

- that may have more than one purpose, e.g. to entertain and to describe;
- where elements in the text have been manipulated in order to achieve a particular purpose, e.g. a narrative can be used to persuade.



## Opportunities to Craft a Range of Texts

While writers in this phase are able to use a variety of text forms, they will benefit from continued support in consolidating their understandings and refining their ability to craft texts. To extend their knowledge of the writer's craft, focus on how the elements in texts can be manipulated.

Writing sessions provide opportunities to demonstrate, discuss and practise many aspects of writing. These could include any of the following.

- Selecting different text forms for different purposes and audiences.
- Organising and structuring texts.
- Using language features.
- Recognising how organisation, structure and language features of texts can be manipulated.
- Planning, drafting, refining and publishing writing.

Conventional writers continue to need many opportunities to write for a variety of purposes and audiences. Such opportunities allow them to experiment with different forms and hone their writing skills. There are many ways to extend the repertoire of texts students write.

- Provide a variety of contexts for writing by including writing in all learning areas.
- Provide time for personal-choice writing.
- Collect, read, display and analyse samples of different text forms.
- Collect, read, display and analyse samples of texts where elements have been manipulated.
- Encourage students to construct frameworks as part of their planning.
- Help students to evaluate their written work.
- Display and discuss texts that show different writing styles.
- Arrange for authors to visit and discuss their craft.
- Provide time for students to imitate or innovate on different writing styles.
- Encourage students to talk about their writing and to take responsibility for improving it.
- Provide explicit feedback about particular aspects of students' writing.
- Continue reading aloud daily to expose students to new text forms.
- Provide both reading and oral-language programs that complement the writing program.
- Set up Author's Chairs in and between classes so that students can openly discuss their writing.

## Crafting Personal Voice and Individual Style

Many things — including a writer's purpose, world view, multiple identity and culture — influence voice within text. Voice in writing is defined in numerous ways.

'Writing words that will make readers listen and be affected.'  
(Tony Romano 2004)

'Voice is the imprint of ourselves on our writing.'  
(Don Graves 1994)

'Voice in writing has to do with a unique personality-on-paper.'  
(Ralph Fletcher 1993)

At this phase it is important to help students continue to develop their use of voice. This can be achieved in a range of ways.

- Show and discuss examples of sentences, passages or entire texts that demonstrate voice.
- Share samples of students' writing that have a strong sense of voice.
- Compare the voice in passages of writing. Discuss how it differs.
- Discuss how the author's voice creates interest.
- Read several books by one author and identify the voice,  
e.g. the style and word choice.
- Model how choice of language can create or change voice,  
e.g. emotive, colloquial.
- Discuss how sentence length can affect voice.
- Have students return to previous writing and identify examples in which voice is evident.
- Have students identify and share a passage where an author's voice is strong.

## Using Metalanguage

Students need to be supported in building a vocabulary that they can use to discuss and describe language, their own writing and the writing process. The vocabulary used to talk about language is known as metalanguage, and when students are able to use it to talk competently about their own writing and learning, it helps them to understand how language operates. Developing metalanguage also helps students to understand the support and feedback provided by teachers.

To help Conventional writers continue to expand and use terms associated with writing and written language, it is important to use metalanguage as part of everyday teaching. This can be done across learning areas, as part of targeted discussions, during explicit



demonstrations, during one-on-one conversations with students, or as part of planned Modelled, Shared, Interactive or Guided Writing sessions.

Certain terms tend to be more prominent when focusing on different aspects of writing; for example, when working with Conventional writers, consider the use of the following terms.

- Use of Texts: ballad, chronological sequence, hypertexts.
- Contextual Understanding: devices, foreshadowing, irony.
- Conventions: footnotes, slang, colons.
- Processes and Strategies: paraphrasing, analogy, evaluating.

For further information about the Use of Texts aspect, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn:

- Chapter 1: Use of Texts
- Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

## Involving Students

### 1 Transformations

Completing Transformations provides students with opportunities to practise and reinforce their control of the conventions used in a range of text forms. Transforming one text form, mode or medium into another is a way of helping them to develop control of the forms. Students need to be familiar with both the original and the new type of text.

Examples of Transformations suitable for Conventional writers include:

- a narrative into a recount;
- a procedure into a recount;
- a poem as a story;
- an informational text rewritten as a feature news or magazine article;
- an informational text re-created as a board game;
- a report re-created as an electronic presentation;
- an excerpt from a novel re-created as a serialised radio program;
- a short story represented as a comic strip;
- a poem represented as a performance.

Transformations require the student comprehending the original text to create a new text. They vary greatly in degree of difficulty according to the text content and text form, and degree of compatibility between the original and the new text form.

## **Conventional Writing Phase**

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Although a fairy tale may be familiar to a student, the structure and organisation of a newspaper article may not. Similarly, a student may have played many board games but rarely considered how one might be constructed.

Students attempting transformations require significant support in understanding and manipulating the two text forms. Teachers can best support students with extensive modelling, sharing and guiding.

### **2 2C2D (Collect, Compare, Display, Discuss)**

Refer to Chapter 7: Transitional Writing Phase, p. 194.

### **3 Read and Retell**

Refer to Chapter 7: Transitional Writing Phase, p. 195.

### **4 Writingo**

Refer to Chapter 6: Early Writing Phase, p. 143.

### **5 Book for My Buddy**

Book for My Buddy provides an opportunity for Conventional writers to craft a text for a specific audience. The activity involves students being allocated a younger student in the school as a ‘buddy’ and then creating a text for the buddy. The challenge is for the student to incorporate the buddy into the text.

- Provide a range of picture books for students to explore. Identify features of the picture books.
- Allocate a buddy from a lower grade to each student.
- In small groups, have students discuss the type of information that might be useful to collect about their buddies to incorporate in the text e.g. name, age, sibling’s names, interests, sports played.
- Have each student create an interview sheet consisting of key questions and response space.
- Organise a time for students to meet and interview their buddies.
- Share ideas on how they could incorporate the buddies in the texts.
- Allocate time for students to write the first draft of their buddies’ picture books.
- Arrange a presentation meeting where students and their buddies meet. Have each student read the picture book aloud to the buddy, sign the text as the author and hand it over to the new owner.



## 6 The End

The End assists students to focus on the craft of creating effective endings in a piece of text. It involves their creating possible endings for a given text, discussing their effectiveness and developing a set of guidelines for writing strong endings.

- Select a suitable short story.
- Read the story to the students, stopping just before the ending.
- Have students work in small groups to write an ending for the story.
- Give copies of all endings to each group and have students rank them from most effective to least effective. For each ranking, they must record their justifications.
- Regroup as a whole class, discuss rankings and list justifications.
- Provide time for students to create guidelines for writing effective story endings.
- Share and collate these as a whole class.
- Read the ending from the original text and discuss it.
- As new texts are explored and insights are gained about story endings, refine the class guidelines.
- Encourage students to use the guidelines as they create their own texts.

As more forms of text are explored, students may discover different guidelines for creating effective endings.

### Guidelines for Endings

- Link back to the opening of the story.
- Wrap up the main idea of the text.
- Let the reader know how you feel, such as expressing a wish or a hope.
- Provide a moral to the story.
- Use a flashback or ‘flash-forward’ in time.
- Final action should evoke a chosen emotion.
- Imply the theme of the story.
- Explain or reiterate the title.
- Ask a question of the reader.
- Create a visual image.
- Make the reader laugh.

## 7 Hidden Sentences

Hidden Sentences provides students with the opportunity to imitate an author’s writing style and voice. Students are asked to insert sentences into a paragraph selected from a text.

- Invite students to select a paragraph from a text; alternatively, provide preselected paragraphs.

## Conventional Writing Phase

- Provide time for students to read and re-read their paragraphs, identifying the style and voice of the author.
- Provide time for them to insert one or two sentences into each existing paragraph. Encourage them to imitate the voice of the author so that their sentences cannot be detected by others.
- Organise students to read their new paragraphs in groups while group members try to identify the sentences that were inserted.

## 8 Let's Start at the Beginning

Let's Start at the Beginning provides an opportunity for students to investigate interesting beginnings and also helps them to focus on crafting effective beginnings in their own writing. Students investigate pairs of beginnings to identify reasons for one being more effective than the other.

- Organise students in small groups and distribute a number of texts of the same type — e.g. adventure, mystery or science fiction — to each group.
- Have groups read the beginning of each text and brainstorm a list of the words, phrases and sentence stems that have been used. Discuss the style, characteristics and effectiveness of each beginning.
- Have groups then apply what they noticed in the sample texts to create a beginning for a new text.
- Allow time for groups to share their new beginnings.
- As a whole class, discuss any commonalities of creating effective beginnings across the different types of text, e.g. setting the scene, leaving the reader wanting more.

## 9 Responding to Texts

Written responses to texts read or viewed will provide Conventional writers with the opportunity to craft a wide range of texts, manipulate elements of texts, and continually broaden their repertoire of written texts. It is important to ensure that any response activity is purposeful and appropriate for the context of the text being used. Thanks are due to Jack Thomson, who contributed many of the following ideas to the *First Steps* Reading Developmental Continuum (1992).

Have students create responses to texts in the following ways.

- Write a lost-and-found advertisement for a significant object belonging to one of the characters or people in the text. Tell why the object was chosen and explain its significance to the character or person.



- Rewrite a section of the text, taking part in it as a character.
- Assume the role of one of the characters or people and write a diary with at least five entries.
- Create a new character. Tell how the text would change with this new character added.
- Write an unsigned letter from the point of view of one character or person, and have the rest of the class work out who it is.
- Write an imagined biography of one of the characters or people.
- Write an account of what they might have done if in a predicament experienced by one of the characters or people.
- Write a letter to the author, sharing the response to the text.
- Write an imagined dialogue between characters or people from two different texts.
- Write a report of an incident as it might have appeared in a newspaper in the time and culture of the text.
- Rewrite a scene in the text as if it took place at a different time, e.g. past or future.
- Rewrite a scene in the text as if took place in a different location, e.g. on a desert island, in Antarctica, on an ocean liner, in your town.
- Create a newspaper report covering an event in the text from the point of view of a witness.
- Write a report as from a private detective assigned to follow the main character or person over a period of time. Tell where he or she went, who was seen, and what was done. Draw conclusions about the motives, values and lifestyle of the character or person.
- Write a report as a psychologist offering advice to the main character or person. Explain what the problem is and what advice would be given.
- Have a written conversation with a partner to explore thoughts and questions about a text. The partners take turns writing on the same sheet of paper.
- Write a poem to describe a historical event.

## 10 Become a Script Writer

Refer to Chapter 7: Transitional Writing Phase, p. 198.

## 11 Shrinking Poetry

Shrinking Poetry assists students to create new text and encourages them to manipulate the elements to create an effective poem. It requires them first to write about a topic, then reduce it to its simplest form to create a poem.

## Conventional Writing Phase

- Provide a list of simple beginning stems for the initial writing.  
Allow students to select from a variety of stems such as  
'I like . . .', 'I wonder . . .', 'I see . . .', 'I wish . . .'
- As a whole class, brainstorm a variety of topics.
- Have each student identify a topic and brainstorm single words or phrases around it.
- Provide a short time for students to write continuously about the topic, using the ideas from their brainstorm. More words may be added.
- Ask students to now reduce their writing to a series of single words or short phrases, which can be arranged down the page to create a poem.

## 12 Choose Your Own Adventure Story

Refer to Chapter 7: Transitional Writing Phase, p. 199.

## 13 Design and Create Websites

Refer to Chapter 9: Proficient Writing Phase, p. 281.

Lesson	Thinking Log	Date
		May 16 <sup>th</sup>
	<p>I love spring with the sight of open flowers and full fresh buds, the crisp smell of cut grass. I love the energy enriching light. I feel refreshed and new.</p> <p>* Spring *</p> <p>Sight of open flowers with full of fresh buds crisp smell of cut grass energy enriching light refreshing and new.</p>	

Figure 8.2



# CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Provide opportunities for students to explain their choice of:
  - text
  - information and ideas included or omitted
  - devices used.
- Encourage students to represent characters and events to create specific effects in literary texts.
- Encourage students to represent people and ideas to create specific effects in informational texts.
- Encourage students to select devices to influence a particular audience.
- Encourage students to use writing to influence change about social issues that concern them.
- Continue to discuss how writers' and readers' knowledge, experiences and perspective affect the composition and interpretation of texts.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for helping Conventional writers to develop contextual understanding is organised under the following headings.

- Exploring Decisions Writers Make
- Representing Characters and Events in Literary Texts
- Representing People and Ideas in Informational Texts
- Selecting Devices
- Writing to Influence Social Issues
- Discussing the Writer's World View

### ***Exploring Decisions Writers Make***

Through reading and discussing a wide range of texts, Conventional writers consider how authors have made selections based on purpose, audience, background, point of view and cultural influences. Guided Writing sessions and writing conferences provide opportunities for discussions related to choices students have made in their own texts.

#### *Purpose and audience*

- Why am I writing this text?
- Who is my target audience?

## **Conventional Writing Phase**

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- What do I know about my audience (age, gender, interests)?
- What does my audience want or need to know?
- What will my audience/reader expect to see in this text?
- What will I do to appeal to the audience?

### *Form and organisation*

- What text form will I choose?
- What organisational features can I incorporate?
- How will the reader expect to see this set out?
- What is the best way to present/publish this information?

### *Content*

- What information needs to be included or left out?
- What point/s do I want to make?
- From what or whose point of view will I write?
- What is the most appropriate language to use?
- Do I need to find further information?
- What resources could I use to find relevant information?

During these sessions, discussions and demonstrations should include the use of reflective commentary and metalanguage.

## ***Representing Characters and Events in Literary Texts***

Guided Writing sessions and writing conferences provide opportunities for students to be supported in making decisions about how they will represent characters and events to create specific effects in literary texts.

- What special effect do I want to create in this text, e.g. scary?
- How will I represent this character in the text?
- What language will I use to represent the character?
- How do I want the reader to feel/think about the characters?
- What events will happen in this text?
- How will my text end?
- If I include illustrations, how will they support the specific effect?

## ***Representing People and Ideas in Informational Texts***

Guided Writing sessions provide opportunities for students to be supported in making decisions about how they will represent ideas or people to create specific effects in informational texts.

- How will I represent the people in this text?
- Do I know any real people like the one I am representing? How are they the same? How are they different?
- What words will I use to represent the person in this text?
- What is the purpose of writing this text?



- What facts do I want to include in this text?
- What facts do I want to exclude from the text?
- Am I representing the facts accurately?

## Selecting Devices

Conventional writers have developed understandings about how authors use different linguistic and print devices, according to audience and purpose. In this phase the focus is to encourage students to select devices for impact in the texts they create.

Discussing the devices and the reasons for choosing them will help Conventional writers to determine the effectiveness of their texts.

Model and encourage the use of devices such as:

- choice of language, e.g. formal, informal;
- inclusion or omission of details;
- foreshadowing — giving a hint of things to come, e.g. As she sat watching television, there was a loud noise outside;
- irony, wit, humour;
- flashback — interrupting the text to show something that happened earlier;
- understatement — used to downplay the gravity of a situation, e.g. 'I have a small tumour in my lung. It is nothing to worry about';
- symbolism — objects used to represent other things, e.g. He had sun-bleached, unkempt hair, wore only board shorts and no shoes;
- stating opinions disguised as facts, e.g. It has been widely reported that . . .;
- quoting statistics, e.g. 85% of dentists surveyed . . .;
- selection of evidence and proof;
- print size;
- font selection;
- choice of colour/s;
- including appropriate amount of detail;
- size of characters, tables or diagrams relative to others;
- composition of the page, e.g. placement of visuals;
- artistic style, e.g. abstract rather than realist.

## Writing to Influence Social Issues

As Conventional writers begin to understand that writers draw on their social and cultural lives to analyse and represent the world around them, they can be encouraged to write not only about topics that interest them, but also about social issues. This helps them develop an interest in addressing real-life problems that occur outside the school setting. Students can be encouraged to maintain involvement in issues that matter — or that bother or confuse

them. As part of individual or group social-action projects, students can be challenged to create a range of texts such as posters, websites, letters to the editor, surveys, petitions and pamphlets.

## ***Discussing the Writer's World View***

Conventional writers will benefit from opportunities to discuss how their knowledge, experiences and perspectives influence the creation of texts. They will also benefit from discussions about how readers bring certain knowledge, experiences and perspectives to their reading of a text, and how this may influence their interpretation.

- What expertise or authority do you have for writing about this topic?
- What experiences have you drawn upon to create this text?
- What do you know about this topic?
- Why did you choose to represent . . . in . . . way?
- From whose point of view have you written the text? Why did you do this?
- From what other point of view could the text have been written? How would this change the text?
- How do you think your background has affected the way you wrote the text?
- How might readers' background, experiences and perspectives influence their reading of the text?
- What have you done that will assist the reader to understand and navigate your text?
- What readers will find your text most appealing?
- Are there any groups of readers who would disagree with what you have written?

For further information about the Contextual Understanding aspect, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 2: Contextual Understanding.

## **Involving Students**

### **1 Literary Lifeboat**

Literary Lifeboat (Johnson 1988) provides Conventional writers with the opportunity to represent characters in a way that appeals to a particular audience and to make decisions about the information and ideas to be included or omitted in a text. It involves assigning groups a character from a literary text. A situation is presented to the students: one character needs to be removed from the text. The



challenge for the groups is to create a written defence of the character, explaining why he or she should stay in the text.

- Select a text that has five or more significant characters.
- Read — or have the students read – the selected text.
- Present the challenge and provide some guidelines for writing a defence, e.g. make justification persuasive; base it on facts in the text; specify the character's role and explain the probable consequence of that character's absence.
- Create small groups and allocate each group a character.
- Provide time for groups to revisit the text and identify events, actions and dialogue that could be incorporated in their character's defence.
- Have each group write a defence of their character.
- Have each group present their defence to the class.
- After all defences have been heard, allow the class to vote and declare the survivors.

## **2 Buy, Buy, Buy!**

Refer to Chapter 7: Transitional Writing Phase, p. 208.

## **3 Weave a Story**



Weave a Story provides an opportunity for students to analyse how authors create specific effects in literary texts. Students read a number of texts of the same type and look for common elements that are used to create characters, settings, events, problems and solutions. They are then given the opportunity to apply the use of identified elements to create a text of the same type.

- Have students revisit a range of texts of a chosen type, e.g. mystery.
- Provide time for them to examine and discuss the elements of each text, e.g. elements within the setting, characters, events.
- Encourage students to use the format provided to record generalisations about the information found in each text; for example:
  - settings are usually dark and gloomy and in less than appealing places, such as cemeteries;
  - characters are represented as sinister by their choice of clothing and appearance.
- Students use the generalisations made to create a text of the same type.

Weave A Story				
My text type is Narrative				
Setting	Characters	Events	Problems	Solutions
7 <sup>th</sup> grade-school country school 1 <sup>st</sup> day of school	- surfer Dude "lucky" - mum, dad + sister - nice + mean teacher - Vicki (girlfriend) - "loner" boy	- moves to new school - shows he can surf - meets Vicki (girlfriend)	- no friends - weird family - gets bullied - in trouble at school	- gets respect + friends (by surfing) - accepts friends - thinks their not so weird.
around Freo W.A. Year 10s	- Rosie - Ash (parents separated) - Pip	- Ash moves to freo from Byron Bay - Ash + rosie run away - caught by police - crash on way back to freo/mum	- Ash wants to live with dad - Rosie wants to rebel against her mum ('control freak')	- Ash makes friends + decides to like freo - Rosie forgives her mum - Ash + Rosie start a relationship (girlfriend/bf)
Hogwarts School of witchcraft + wizardry	- Harry - Ron - Hermione - Hagrid - Voldemort	- Finds out he's a wizard - goes to wizard school - meets Ron + Hermione	- Voldemort/dark wizard has reappeared - Protecting philosopher's stone/holds power of immortality	- Harry retrieves stone - Dumbledore destroys stone - Voldemort vanishes again - Lupin dies

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Figure 8.3

#### 4 Who Are You?

Who Are You? (Strong 2001) encourages students to visualise a character from a literary text or a person from an informational text, basing the visualisation on a list of items that 'belong' to the character or person. Students are asked to use the list to create a personality for the character or person. The activity helps students understand that characters or people can be represented in many different ways according to a writer's knowledge, experience and perspective.

- Discuss with students how a person's personal effects and keepsakes often reflect the personality. Items can often give clues to a person's identity and life history.
- Use items from your own life, or that of a student volunteer, to illustrate the above point.
- Divide the class into small groups and explain that each group will be given a list of personal items and keepsakes belonging to a character or person, e.g. a black-and-white photo of a baby, a pair of reading glasses, an antique-looking key, some knitting, a newspaper clipping.
- Provide time for students to consider the items carefully and to discuss the type of person or character that may be associated with them.
- Have students individually sketch and write a description of this character or person.
- Provide time for them to share their descriptions and sketches.



## 5 The Real Me!



The Real Me! helps to promote the understanding that a writer's knowledge, experiences and perspective affect the creation of a text, especially of the characters. Students consider aspects of public and private self, and use this knowledge to create characters that have greater depth and will appeal to the readers.

- Discuss with students how everyone has a public self and a private self. Have them make suggestions as to what makes up the public self, e.g. appearance, known accomplishments and biographical information in the public domain. Discuss what would make up the private self, e.g. emotions, strengths, fears and personality traits.
- Provide time for students to record features of their public and private selves.
- Have students use this information to create a simple description titled 'The Real Me'.
- Provide time for them to share their descriptions.
- Have students return to a piece of their own writing and encourage them to consider how they could add to the public and private sides of a chosen character or person.

First Steps: Second Edition		Writing Map of Development
Name: Ruth		Date: 10th March
<b>The Real Me</b>		
<b>Public Self</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confident &amp; well spoken</li> <li>• well organised</li> <li>• well dressed - wear school uniform</li> <li>• member of the school swim team and debating team</li> </ul>	<b>Private Self</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• scared of heights</li> <li>• shy at first</li> <li>• sense of humour</li> <li>• moody in mornings</li> </ul>	
<p><i>The Real Me appears confident and well spoken but when I first meet people my stomach fills with butterflies and I worry about saying the wrong thing. In the mornings I take a while to wake up and can be snappy around family members however as the day goes by my sense of humour kicks in.</i></p>		
<small>© Western Australian Minister for Education.</small>		<small>MAY BE COPIED FOR CLASSROOM USE ONLY</small>

Figure 8.4

## **6 Interviewing**

Refer to Chapter 7: Transitional Writing Phase, p. 205.

## **7 Change the Point of View**

Refer to Chapter 7: Transitional Writing Phase, p. 206.

## **8 Spot the Devices**

Refer to Chapter 7: Transitional Writing Phase, p. 206.

## **9 Text Innovation**

Refer to Chapter 7: Transitional Writing Phase, p. 206.

## **10 Imitate the Author**

Refer to Chapter 7: Transitional Writing Phase, p. 207.

## **11 Connect and Compare**

Connect and Compare encourages Conventional writers to begin to consider how their world view affects the creation of texts. By analysing characters previously developed, students make connections and comparisons between what they know about the world in which they live and the way they choose to represent a character or person in a text.

- Have students select a main character in a literary text or a person in an informational text they have previously created.
- Invite them to identify the role of the character or person, e.g. Michelle is a teenage girl, Mr Flint is a teacher.
- Have students record what they know about a real-life person who falls into the same category.
- Have students re-read their previously created text.
- Provide time for them to identify and record how the person or character has been represented in the text.
- Have them identify any differences or similarities in what they know and how the character or person has been represented in the text.
- Provide opportunities for students to consider how they could change the way the character or person is represented, and the impact this would have on the text.

## **12 Identification Kit**



Completing the Identification Kit activity aids Conventional writers in understanding that writers' own knowledge, experiences and perspectives affect the way they create characters or people and



represent events or facts in texts. This activity helps students to be able to create detailed characters in their own writing. They use their power of observation to analyse a person's features and create a detailed character description.

- Group students in pairs.
- Provide each pair with a picture of a person and have them study the person's features.
- Have them orally describe the face they have observed.
- Provide students with an Identification Kit profile. This is a list of features, e.g. oval face, square jaw, balding, long blond hair, green eyes, heavy-set eyebrows, crooked nose, moustache, scar, missing front tooth.
- Have each pair revisit the person they orally described and use the Identification Kit to write a paragraph as a witness description.
- Collect all the witness descriptions and matching pictures. Shuffle them, have a student read a randomly chosen description, and see if the other students can find the matching picture.

#### *Extension*

Have students investigate and include descriptions of further features of their characters, e.g. body appearance, size, mannerisms, vocation, hobbies, family, friends, personality and temperament.

#### **Identification Kit Profile**

**Face shape:** oval, round, square, pointed

**Hair:** bald, balding, long, short, straight, curly, wavy, spiked, blond, brown, black, red, brunette, side parting, central parting; wore a cap, beanie, balaclava, scarf, wig

**Eyes:** round, oval, brown, hazel, blue, heavy eyebrows, fine brows, glasses

**Nose:** crooked, pointed, bulbous, big, broad, long

**Mouth:** big lips, thin lips, missing front teeth, braces

**Facial hair:** beard, sideburns, moustache

**Distinguishing features:** scars, tattoos, freckles, birthmarks, piercings

**Skin colouring:** fair, dark, olive, sallow

**Jewellery:** necklace, earrings

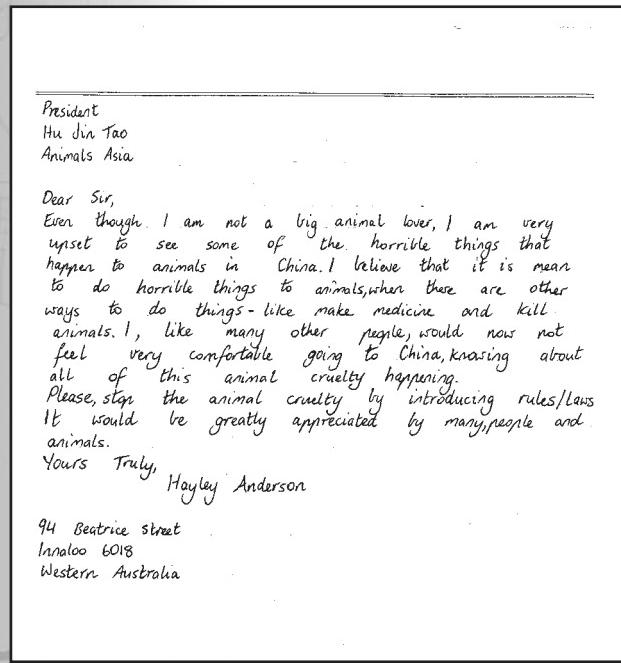


Figure 8.5 A student's letter of protest

## 13 Writer's Notebook

Writer's Notebook (Bomer & Bomer 2001) provides students with an avenue for recording reflections, observations and thoughts about everyday events or social issues they believe should be addressed. These events may happen in school, in the community or at home; they may be seen on television or read about in a newspaper, and should concern things students feel are unfair or unjust. Students are encouraged to make regular entries in a writer's notebook about these topics of concern.

Selected entries are then used as a stimulus for creating a plan of action around the topic or issue. Students can work individually or in groups to move forward

with their action project by creating various texts for selected purposes and audiences.

## 14 What's the Theme?



What's the Theme? helps students to begin to use writing as a means of addressing social issues or problems. It involves writers in reading a text, analysing it to identify a theme, and then making connections between the text and personal life experiences. These connections are used as a basis for writing to induce some form of positive change in real life. The types of themes or issues that might be explored through literature could include crime, racial violence, gangs, guns, working parents, gender roles, war, peace, separation of families, racial violence or environmental issues.

- Select a text around a chosen social issue or theme, e.g. bombing.
- Have students read the text.
- Provide time for them to work in small groups to discuss the text and identify the theme or social issue raised.
- Invite them to complete a response sheet, as provided on the Writing CD-ROM. Encourage each student to make a personal connection to the issue raised in the text.
- As a whole class, discuss some possible actions around the issue.
- Provide time for students to work alone or in small groups to create texts for selected purposes and audiences in an effort to bring about some form of change around the issue.



# CONVENTIONS

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Provide opportunities for students to develop, refine and use new vocabulary.
- Continue to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. technical terms.
- Continue to build students' knowledge about words and word parts, e.g. derivatives and word origins.
- Extend students' knowledge of the use of punctuation, e.g. colons, hyphens.
- Extend students' knowledge and use of parts of speech and their relationships, e.g. active and passive verbs.
- Continue to teach students to construct and manipulate a variety of sentences.
- Teach students different ways to develop cohesive paragraphs.
- Continue to build knowledge of different text forms.
- Build knowledge of texts where combinations and adaptations of text structure and organisation have been used.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for supporting Conventional writers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.

- Building Vocabulary
- Building Word Knowledge
- Understanding Conventions of Grammar
- Building Text-Form Knowledge

### **Building Vocabulary**

All students, when they arrive at school, already have an oral vocabulary based on the speech variety and experiences at home. Research has shown that vocabulary acquisition is crucial to academic development (Baker, Simmons & Kameenui 1998), so it is important for teachers to ensure Conventional writers have every opportunity to expand their vocabulary across a broad range of contexts and experiences.

### **Developing Vocabulary**

Reading provides models of rich language that help students to learn many new words, and writing provides authentic contexts for them to use those words and develop ownership of them.

Conventional writers can be supported in developing their vocabulary in the following ways.

- Modelling the use of language in different contexts.
- Valuing existing speech variety if non-standard or in an additional language or dialect.
- Introducing new subject-specific vocabulary across the curriculum, e.g. the language of science and technology.
- Providing experiences through activities outside the classroom e.g. trips or excursions, and activities inside the classroom, e.g. manipulating materials, inviting guest speakers, or capitalising on any impromptu events.
- Discussing written words at every opportunity, pointing out the author's choice and why it is the 'best fit' in the context.
- Involving students in meaningful problem-solving activities, word games and investigations.
- Jointly constructing Word Walls featuring the words students are learning.
- Providing opportunities for students to read and write for a range of purposes.
- Immersing students in a range of texts.
- Using a rich vocabulary in all contexts.

### **Building a Bank of Words That Are Automatically Spelt and Used**

At all phases of development students copy, recall and have-a-go at spelling words during independent writing. The bank of words that can be automatically spelt and used can be made up of high-frequency words, personally significant words, topic or theme words, or signal words.

Exploring and using these words in reading, writing and any across-curriculum activities will help to reinforce their recognition and use. For some students, ongoing systematic instruction is essential to help them develop automaticity; for others, the repeated reading and writing of texts helps them develop the ability to spell a bank of words automatically.

In this phase, it is important to build on the bank of words that students already know. For Conventional writers, include the following.



### *Personally significant words*

These are words significant to a student personally, e.g. words associated with an interest or hobby.

### *Topic or theme words*

These words are related to topics, themes or subject areas being studied such as:

- Society and Environment, e.g. environment, resources, elements, ecology;
- English, e.g. representation, perspective, nuance;
- Mathematics, e.g. algorithm, theorem;
- Science, e.g. osmosis, photosynthesis;
- Health and Physical Education, e.g. circulatory, pulmonary, cardiovascular;
- Technology, e.g. hydraulic, computational;
- Society and Environment, e.g. ecosystems, biodiversity, heritage.

### *Signal words*

These are associated with text forms and text structures, and signal the relationships between ideas in the text, e.g. therefore, before, although, because.

At this phase students can begin to take responsibility for keeping a spelling journal to record words they already know and words they wish to learn. Encourage writers to generate alternative spellings for unknown words.

## ***Building Word Knowledge***

As students' understanding of graphophonics expands, it is essential to extend their knowledge of words, word parts and how words work. It is important to build their word awareness through experiences such as discovering generalisations, participating in open-ended activities and playing with words.

The following list may provide a focus for supporting Conventional writers.

- Suffixes, e.g. ivy, ist, less
- Prefixes, e.g. auto, fore, im
- Plurals, e.g. antennae, oases
- Homophones, e.g. air, heir
- Contractions, e.g. haven't, there's
- Compound words, e.g. breakfast, silkworms, half-brother
- Word origins, e.g. aqua, ordo, tres

## ***Understanding Conventions of Grammar***

At all phases of development it is important to draw attention to the conventions of grammar used in a range of texts. This includes conventions associated with punctuation, parts of language, sentence structure and overall text construction. It is important that these conventions are introduced, revisited and practised in meaningful contexts. Modelled and Shared Reading and Writing provide a springboard for exploring many of them.

### ***Punctuation and Parts of Speech***

It is beneficial for Conventional writers to continue to build their knowledge about the use of:

- punctuation, e.g. colons, semicolons, hyphens, ellipses;
- the function and relationship of parts of speech, e.g. present and past participles, active and passive verbs, comparative and superlative adjectives.

### ***Constructing Sentences***

Students in this phase continue to benefit from knowing how to construct and manipulate a variety of sentences, including statements, questions, commands, exclamations or greetings. Conventional writers can be encouraged to create simple, compound and complex sentences.

- Sentences can be joined to add variety and make the text flow.
- The order of phrases and clauses in sentences can be varied to make writing interesting.
- The length of sentences helps to create specific effects, e.g. short sentences for excitement.

### ***Construction of Paragraphs and Texts***

In constructing coherent texts, Conventional writers continue to benefit from a focus on developing and refining their understanding of the characteristics of cohesive paragraphs. A cohesive paragraph is one that 'hangs together' by means of cohesive devices, such as the use of synonyms, pronouns and repetition.

#### *Synonyms*

Words with similar meaning that are substituted for words already used. For example, 'Honey Bees collect nectar from flowers to make honey. These insects travel many miles to gather the nectar.'

#### *Pronouns*

Words that refer back to nouns or other pronouns. For example, 'Honey Bees collect nectar from flowers to make honey. They travel many miles to collect the nectar.'



### *Repetition*

Deliberate repetition of key words, related words or phrases. For example, a paragraph about the process of mummification might include ‘mummy’, ‘mummies’, ‘mummify’ and ‘the process’.

A cohesive text may have all of the above devices, but still lack coherence. A text has coherence when the ideas in it are related and sequenced in such a way that the reader understands the relationships between them. This includes having a single idea or topic, using an appropriate text structure, and organising a logical sequence of sentences and paragraphs. Consistency in point of view, verb tense and number are also important aspects of coherence. Conventional writers can explore how coherence in electronic texts is created in ways different from those used for linear texts — for example, with the use of hyperlinks and multiple connections.

## ***Building Text-Form Knowledge***

Building students’ knowledge about text forms assists them to successfully construct a range of texts and to understand the purpose, structure and organisation of those texts. Students benefit from reading different examples of the same text form, making comparisons and identifying defining features.

Modelled, Shared and Guided Reading and Writing sessions provide an opportunity for Conventional writers to discuss and extend their knowledge about the conventions of the structure, organisation and language features of a wide range of text forms. These sessions can also include a focus on combining and adapting text structures and organisational features to create hybrid texts in order to achieve a specific purpose and enhance impact; for example, a literary text may be used to persuade, or a procedural text to entertain.

Knowledge about text forms includes understanding the purpose, audience, text organisation, text structure and language features of a particular form.

### ***Purpose***

All texts are written and read for a reason. The purpose may be to entertain, as in most literary texts, or to explain, describe or inquire as in some informational texts. Understanding the purpose of a writing event will assist students to make decisions about text organisation and structure, and the language used.

Students need to be exposed to a range of texts written for a variety of purposes. Conventional writers should be encouraged to create

## **Conventional Writing Phase**

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texts for a range of purposes. For a list of forms related to purposes, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 1.

### ***Text Organisation***

Text organisation refers to the way a text is organised — the layout. Conventional writers will benefit from understanding text-form frameworks in order to be able to decide whether or not a framework is to be adhered to or adapted.

Conventional writers can be introduced to the function, terminology and use of a range of organisational features such as:

- diagrams and other visual aids (photographs, graphs, tables, cross-sections);
- tables of contents;
- indexes;
- glossaries;
- paragraphs;
- appendixes;
- bibliographies;
- hyperlinks;
- footnotes;
- prefaces.

It is important to encourage Conventional writers to use appropriate organisational features in their own texts. For a list of further organisational features in different texts, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 1.

### ***Text Structure***

Text structure refers to the way ideas, feelings or information are linked in a text. These could include:

- problem and solution
- compare and contrast
- cause and effect
- listing: logical or chronological sequence, collection of details.

Conventional writers will benefit from being exposed to a variety of text forms that use different structures. Encourage writers to use a variety of structures in their own texts.

### ***Language Features***

The term ‘language features’ refers to the type of vocabulary and grammar used in a text. Each text form has specific language features that are appropriate to it; for example, an exposition may include the following features:



- generalised participants, e.g. recreational fisherman;
- frequent use of passives, e.g. were caught, is influenced by;
- mainly timeless present tense, e.g. are, happens, turns;
- nominalisation, e.g. computation, calculation;
- signal words, e.g. therefore, so, because of.

Students can be introduced to appropriate language features in the context of learning about new forms of writing. For a detailed description of language features linked to text forms, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 1.

For further information about the Conventions aspect, see

*Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn:

- Chapter 3: Conventions
- Chapter 1: Use of Texts.

## Involving Students

### 1 Modifying Sentences

Modifying Sentences (Strong 2001) helps students to combine and extend sentences. Students create complex sentences by building on a main clause. Extending simple sentences by adding relevant information helps them begin to understand how to create clear pictures for their readers.

- Provide students with a simple sentence consisting of a main clause, e.g. A parent approached the principal's office.
- Pose questions to students to help them generate further information, e.g. Who was the parent? What did he look like? What was his attitude? What was his purpose?
- After discussing possible responses to the questions, have each student modify the sentence to incorporate new information.
- Encourage them to experiment with alternative combinations.
- Allow time for them to share their sentences and discuss the effectiveness of each one.

### 2 Scrambled Texts

Scrambled Texts helps students to use semantic and syntactic clues to create cohesive and coherent texts. Students are invited to reconstruct texts that have been broken into sections and to discuss the effectiveness of alternative sequences.

- Provide pairs of students with an envelope containing a text cut into paragraphs.

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- Have students read the paragraphs and sort them to form a cohesive and coherent text.
- Have them share and compare their completed texts with others. Encourage them to discuss the effectiveness of any sequences that differ.
- Highlight the conventions that linked the paragraphs and helped students to create a coherent text, e.g. topic sentences, repetition, time order, conjunctions, cause and effect.

## 3 Word Cline

Refer to Chapter 7: Transitional Writing Phase, p. 217.

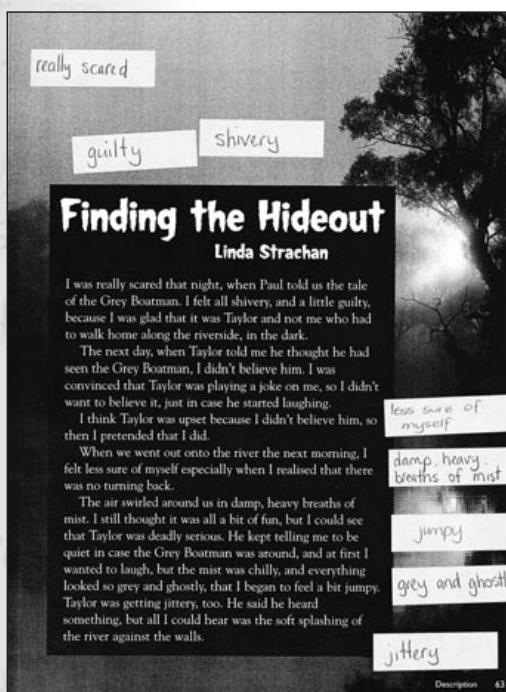
## 4 Base Words Plus

Refer to Chapter 7: Transitional Writing Phase, p. 220.

## 5 Scary Words

The Scary Words activity assists students to generate words and phrases used in thriller, mystery or horror texts. They are required to analyse a variety of texts and to brainstorm words or phrases that best achieve a sense of suspense.

- Provide students, in groups, with an example of a selected text type, e.g. mystery.
- Have them skim and scan the text to identify the language used to create suspense.
- Invite the groups to record words and phrases used in the text on stick-on notes.
- As a whole class, collate the words and phrases into categories, e.g. noises, emotions, events, setting.
- Provide time for the groups to collaboratively create a mystery text incorporating the language recorded on the class collation.



**Figure 8.6** Brainstorming words to create suspense

This activity could be employed for the building of vocabulary associated with other types of texts.

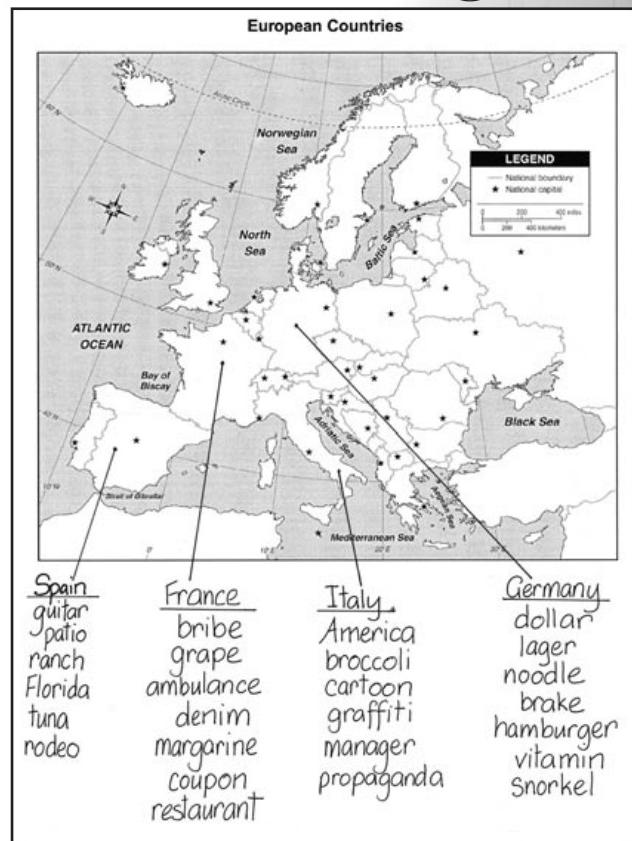
## 6 Country of Origin

Country of Origin involves students in investigating how words from different countries have been incorporated into the English language. Providing time for students to investigate the country of origin of selected words will help develop vocabulary and



encourage them to incorporate new words into their writing.

- Discuss how words from other countries have made their way into everyday use in the English language.
- Provide time for students to brainstorm words they know that have originated in another country.
- Record these words randomly on a chart. Add to the brainstormed list; an Internet search using key words such as ‘borrowed words’ will provide numerous examples.
- Allocate words to small groups of students and provide time for them to investigate each country of origin.
- Challenge them to find other words from that country.
- Provide time for them to share their findings and sort words on the class chart according to country of origin, e.g. France — boutique, café; Germany — blitz, hamburger; Japan — origami, geisha.
- If appropriate, have students write the words they have found on a map of the world to indicate the country of origin.



**Figure 8.7** A student’s allocation of ‘borrowed’ words

## 7 Changing Tense

Changing Tense helps Conventional writers to discover the changes that need to be made to a text when rewriting it in a different tense. Students are challenged to identify the tense of a particular text and re-create it in a different tense, e.g. past to present, present to future.

- Provide students with a short text or an extract from a text.
- Have them read through the text and identify the tense used.
- Provide time for them to discuss how the text needs to be changed when rewriting it in an allocated new tense.
- Have students rewrite the text in this tense.
- Provide time for them to share newly created texts and identify the parts of speech that were altered according to the new tense.
- Create a class chart of generalisations about writing in the past, present and future tenses.

## 8 Playing with Words

Although Conventional writers have usually gained control of the English spelling system as well as learnt what to do when they cannot immediately spell a word, it is still important to provide a range of relevant challenges that help them continue to expand their vocabulary. Students will benefit from opportunities to refine their spelling knowledge through exploring the way words are combined, extended and changed to suit meaning. The following activities can be used across a range of learning areas.

- Use prefixes and suffixes to form new words from base words, e.g. port: transport, report, support, portable, important.
- Group words selected from reading or writing texts according to meaning.
- Investigate the meaning of Latin or Greek roots.
- Identify and explore acronyms such as NASA, Qantas, scuba, Anzac, Unesco.
- Identify and discuss abbreviated words.
- Identify and discuss portmanteau words (words put together to form new words), e.g. horrible and tremendous form horrendous.
- Identify and discuss onomatopoeic words (words that have been created to resemble sound), e.g. creak, boom, hiss.
- Identify words derived from people's names or titles, e.g. cardigan from Lord Cardigan, pavlova from Anna Pavlova.
- Sort and classify words according to their countries of origin.
- Collect metaphors, similes, palindromes and idioms.

## 9 Word Observations

Refer to Chapter 7: Transitional Writing Phase, p. 219.

## 10 Sentence Manipulation

Time spent on sentence manipulation activities is invaluable in supporting Conventional writers to create cohesive and coherent texts with varying sentence length. Students can be encouraged to write short sentences to create a sense of urgency and excitement or long sentences to describe a scene or a character. Manipulation activities could include any of the following.

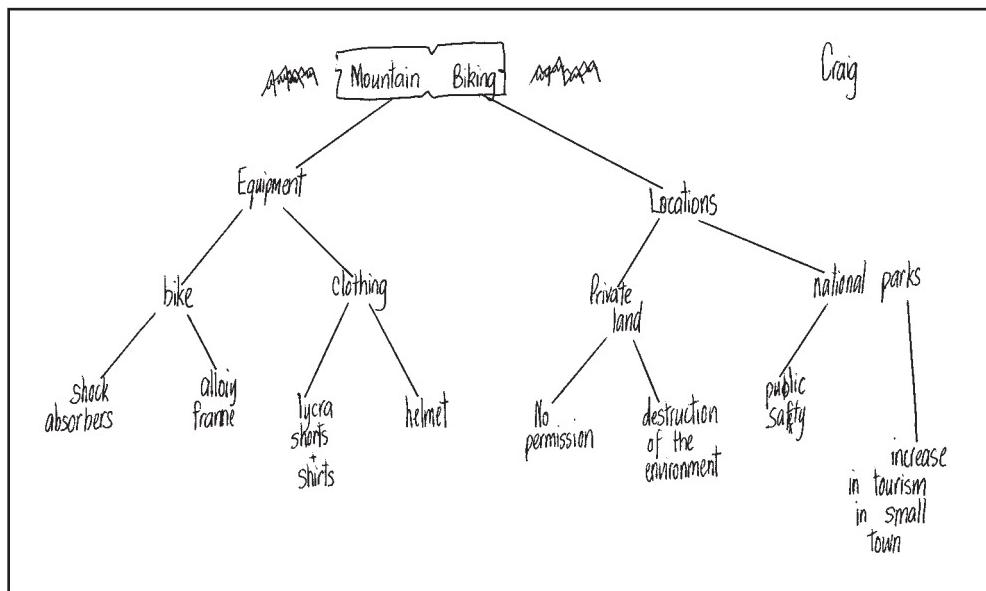
- Changing one type of sentence into another type, e.g. using types such as command, exclamation, question, statement.
- Transforming a sentence by experimenting with the position of words, clauses and phrases.
- Expanding sentences by adding further relevant information.
- Reducing sentences by removing words, clauses or phrases.



## 11 Tree Diagrams

Involving small groups of students in collaboratively constructing branching tree diagrams helps them to refine vocabulary and create a plan for writing about a particular topic. Tree diagrams are most effective when used in the context of different learning areas.

- Provide groups of students with a central focus that has been selected from a relevant topic of study, e.g. mountain biking.
- Invite one student in each group to record this on a large sheet of paper. This sheet should then be passed to a second student to record two associated words, e.g. bike trails, cyclists.
- Direct a third student to brainstorm two associated words for each of the previous categories.
- Have students continue this process until the range of associated words for the tree diagram has been exhausted.
- Provide time for students to use the tree diagram to help plan the creation of a related text on the topic provided.



**Figure 8.8**

## 12 Generic Games

Refer to Chapter 6: Early Writing Phase, p. 175–180.

# PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. orthographic knowledge, cultural knowledge.
- Continue to teach strategies used throughout the writing process.
- Consolidate known spelling strategies.
- Encourage students to discuss the effectiveness of various ways they plan for writing.
- Encourage students to use proofreading, editing and revising to refine their writing.
- Continue to encourage students to select and use publishing formats that best suit purpose and audience, e.g. website, video, portfolio.
- Encourage students to evaluate their effectiveness in retrieving, recording and organising information from texts and to critique own texts.
- Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.

## Organisation of the Processes and Strategies Aspect

There are several differences in the organisation of the Processes and Strategies aspect. Both the Teaching Notes and the Teaching and Learning Experiences (Involving Students) are located in *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

The rationale for these differences is that the processes and strategies of spelling and writing are not conceptually hierarchical and therefore not phase-specific. In all phases, a variety of writing processes and strategies need to be introduced, developed and consolidated.

What varies from one phase to the next is the growth in:

- the number and integration of strategies used throughout the processes of writing;



- the awareness and monitoring of writing processes;
- the efficiency in use of the processes of writing;
- the ability to articulate the use of the strategies used in the processes of writing;
- the awareness of how the use of processes helps with composing texts.

# Supporting Parents of Conventional Writers

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF CONVENTIONAL WRITERS

Conventional writers create a wide variety of texts such as biographies, web pages and documentary scripts. They can adjust their writing to suit specific purposes and audiences. Conventional writers write cohesive paragraphs and demonstrate control over the use of grammar, punctuation and vocabulary. They have developed a large range of strategies for spelling unknown words.

## Supporting Conventional Writers in the Home

Conventional writers will benefit from a range of experiences in the home setting. Ideas for providing appropriate experiences are available on Parent Cards located on the *First Steps* Writing CD-ROM. Teachers can select appropriate cards for each Conventional writer and copy them for parents to use at home.



### Parent Cards

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>1</b> General Description and How to Support Conventional Writers | <b>5</b> Building Understandings about Different Types of Writing  |
| <b>2</b> Writing and Reading Links                                   | <b>6</b> Supporting Vocabulary and Spelling                        |
| <b>3</b> Supporting the Writing Process                              | <b>7</b> Supporting Project Work — Accessing and Using Information |
| <b>4</b> Supporting Punctuation and Grammar                          |  |

Also available on the Writing CD-ROM is a parent-friendly version of the Writing Map of Development.

## CHAPTER 9

# Proficient Writing Phase

2/9/04  
Sarah-Jane Meyer  
History Research Investigation  
**Society and Environment- History Research Investigation**  
Sarah-Jane Meyer- 10.2 (Mrs Callaghan)

*Discuss the nature and significance of one international event from World War II, one event concerning Australia and the contribution of one leader during World War II.*

Unresolved issues from World War I had been festering for 21 years leading to the outbreak of World War II at a time when the world was still recovering from the effects of the previous war. On September 1<sup>st</sup> 1939, Germany declared war on Poland, supporting Great Britain, Australia joined on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September. The study of two monumental events, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour and the Battles along the Kokoda Trail, leads to the recognition of their significance and importance. Australian Prime Minister, John Curtin also made a noteworthy contribution to the war. These events, recognised as significant in the outcome of war, also affect the nation we live in today.

'Pearl Harbour' was the location of a surprise attack that Japan launched on the United States Pacific Fleet on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December 1941. At 7:55 AM Hawaii Time<sup>1</sup>, Japanese planes bombed and torpedoed the fleet that were docked in the harbour. In two hours, 18 ships, 181 aeroplanes and 2,400 US lives were lost. In comparison, six submarines, twenty-nine Japanese aircraft and less than 100 Japanese troops were destroyed<sup>2</sup>. Leading up to the attack, Japan was planning to claim an empire consisting of the Pacific Islands. The only major force that was standing in their way was the USA Pacific Fleet, docked at Pearl Harbour. Many in the Japanese public believed that their surprise attack on the United States would be an immediate victory but the cause of their eventual defeat. Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto warned, "Japan would never be able to beat this industrial giant."<sup>3</sup> As such a major event, we recognise that the Japanese attacks on Pearl harbour had calamitous effects on the outcome of the war and the support system existing between nations today.

The attack on Pearl Harbour was an instantaneous success for the Japanese but also the beginning of their downfall. The day after the attacks, the American President, Franklin D. Roosevelt asked the Congress to declare war on Japan. "Since the unprovoked attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire."<sup>4</sup> In rejoinder to this, Germany and Italy, Japan's allies declared war on America and the war travelled out of Europe. After their success at Pearl harbour, the Japanese took over many colonies that were later reclaimed by the Americans. Constant tension existed between America and

<sup>1</sup> William E. Shapiro, *Pearl Harbour* (New York: Franklin Watts, 1984) pg. 5  
<sup>2</sup> Ibid, pg. 66  
<sup>3</sup> Nightingale, E., "Attack on Pearl Harbour- 1941" 1997  
<http://www.eyewitnesshistory.com/pearl.htm> (August 22<sup>nd</sup>)  
<sup>4</sup> Shapiro- *Pearl Harbour*, pg. 7

Volume 8 Issue 5  
Tuesday, September 21st

## Song Sales

## THE TUNE TIMES

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Monet's Exhibition	2
Paris Music Festival	2
Combination of the Arts	3
Drama and Music II	4
Renoir copies Bach!	5
Symphony Quartets	6

**Special points of interest:**

- The background information of our new style "Impressionism"
- Its impact on the musical world
- Some elements of this style
- Public opinions of Impressionism



Debussy's unique new composition has been derived from art such as this by Claude Monet

### IMPRESSIONISM- THE NEW LOOK OF MUSIC

Many music lovers have witnessed the latest in musical fashions over the past weekend at the annual Paris music festival. Debussy, a fresh composer has exposed his new compositional style based on a style of art also fighting for its place in classic galleries. He shows us blurry images from Monet and Renoir, appearing more and more frequently have sought their way in to Debussy's composition. Maybe the missing link between romantic music and the abstract 20<sup>th</sup> century sounds, impressionism, as it has been labelled, is the work of a later impressionist pioneer, Claude Debussy. Labelled by many of his teachers and musical critics as a musical rebel who "improvised unorthodox chord progressions of dissonances that did not resolve", Claude is unfazed by experimental ideas in composition and not concerned with the use of them. Impressionist music has much the same idea as that behind the visual art of it's kind. An attempt to portray a scene or feeling, nothing is definite, sharp or specific. Debussy expresses impressionism as "being able to express every shade of meaning". Emphasis, in impressionist works is placed on fluidity, atmosphere and particularly tone colour. Variations in timbre, use of instruments and rhythmic ideas are distinguishing features of impressionist music in addition to the intense beauty and sensual feel that it brags.

The reaction to Debussy's composition were diverse with many accomodating of the new ideas, others in sharp opposition to the strange sounds he was introducing to them. Understandably, many will take a while to adjust to these new, exiting and unique musical concepts but it is common belief that this is the beginning of what promises to be a turning point in music. The performance of Debussy's composition is the beginning to a new world of music. We have turned away from the strict, traditional ideas that have been so clearly defined in past musical eras into the unknown, new style that will generate the imagination and creative elements of music.

Figure 9.1

## Global Statement

*Proficient writers demonstrate control over all components of the writing process. They understand how purpose and audience impact on writing and are able to craft and manipulate texts to suit. They compose texts such as research papers, newspaper articles, expositions and hypertexts. Proficient writers are able to convey detailed information and explore different perspectives. They have developed an extensive vocabulary, and use a multistrategy approach to spelling.*

# Proficient Writing Indicators

## Use of Texts

- ◆ Controls the crafting of a large repertoire of texts.
- ◆ Critiques own texts by evaluating the information retrieved, recorded and organised.
- Manipulates known text forms to create hybrid texts.
- Constructs sustained and unified literary texts.
- Writes extended informational texts using a variety of sources of information.
- Develops topics fully.
- Writes texts containing complex and abstract themes or issues.
- Writes to define, clarify and develop ideas and express creativity.
- Writes with conviction, using a strong personal voice.
- Uses the metalanguage associated with writing, e.g. perspective, nuance, linguistic conventions.

## Contextual Understanding

- ◆ Makes critical choices about the composition of a text to suit different purposes and to influence audiences.
- ◆ Consciously provokes positive or negative responses through the representation of characters and events in literary texts.
- ◆ Consciously provokes positive or negative responses through the representation of people and ideas in informational texts.
- ◆ Selects devices designed to enhance impact or to influence a particular audience.
- Uses devices to evoke reader response.
- Expresses a well-reasoned point of view in writing.
- Can write about one topic from different points of view.
- Demonstrates ability to view writing from a reader's perspective.
- Deliberately leaves gaps in texts to actively involve the audience.

## Conventions

- ◆ Selects vocabulary for its shades of meaning and effect.
- ◆ Has accumulated an extensive bank of known words that are spelt and used correctly.
- ◆ Is aware of the many letter patterns that are characteristic of the English spelling system.
- ◆ Uses grammatically complex sentences appropriately and correctly.

- ◆ Organises paragraphs logically to form a cohesive text.
- Chooses appropriate words to create atmosphere and mood.
- Discusses the choice of words, clauses or phrases, and their impact on style.
- Sustains appropriate language throughout.
- Discusses and accurately uses a range of conjunctions, e.g. although, neither.
- Judges the effectiveness of using active or passive voice in texts.
- Uses punctuation to enhance meaning.
- Deliberately contravenes some linguistic conventions to manipulate the reader, e.g. incomplete sentences, no punctuation.

## Processes and Strategies

- ◆ Consciously adds to semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge as required, when writing.
- ◆ Selects appropriate strategies to use throughout the writing process.
- ◆ Accurately spells, using a multistrategy approach.
- ◆ Plans for writing in efficient and effective ways.
- ◆ Refines writing to enhance impact.
- ◆ Makes critical choices about the publication of texts to suit different purposes and to create impact.
- Accurately spells words with uncommon spelling patterns or with irregular spelling, e.g. aisle, quay, liaise.
- Uses similarities, differences, relationships and origins of words to spell unknown words.
- Uses spelling references such as dictionaries, thesauruses and spell-checkers appropriately.
- Selects relevant planning processes from a broad repertoire.
- Takes notes, selects and synthesises relevant information and plans text sequence.
- Edits and proofreads for precision.
- Reviews writing holistically to ensure effectiveness.
- Selects computer software for efficient and effective publication of different texts.
- Applies knowledge of copyright and plagiarism regulations when creating texts.

*Note The terms 'write' and 'writing' encompass the use of traditional tools, such as pen and paper, as well as the use of electronic tools such as computers or mobile phones.*

*The term 'texts' refers to both literary and informational texts and includes visual, spoken or written texts. These may be printed, electronic, live or multimodal.*



# Major Teaching Emphases

## Environment and Attitude (see p. 270)

- Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.
- Foster students' enjoyment of writing.
- Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. creating hybrid texts, refining texts.
- Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.

## Use of Texts (see p. 274)

- Encourage students to explore and discuss a wide range of literary and informational texts.
- Encourage students to craft a range of literary and informational texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Encourage students to manipulate elements to craft a range of texts, e.g. hybrid texts, multimodal texts.
- Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.
- Encourage students to independently use the metalanguage associated with writing.

## Contextual Understanding (see p. 282)

- Continue to provide opportunities for students to discuss the choices they have made when crafting texts, such as:
  - text form
  - devices used to influence
  - the representation of people and ideas
  - the representation of characters and events.
- Encourage students to use writing to influence change about social issues that concern them.
- Explore how the ideologies of the writer and the reader combine to create an interpretation of the text.

## Conventions (see p. 291)

- Encourage students to take responsibility for extending, refining and using new vocabulary.
- Reinforce to students their obligation to use spelling and grammar that is appropriate to the context.
- Continue to teach students how to compose cohesive paragraphs and coherent texts.
- Encourage students to build their knowledge of different text forms as required.
- Continue to explore texts where combinations and adaptations of conventions have been used.

## Processes and Strategies (see p. 301)

- Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge.
- Consolidate strategies used throughout the writing process.
- Consolidate spelling strategies.
- Encourage students to be selective in the way they plan for writing.
- Encourage students to refine their texts holistically to ensure they are effective.
- Encourage students to be selective in their choice of publication formats.
- Continue to encourage students to evaluate their effectiveness in retrieving, recording and organising information from texts and to critique own texts.
- Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.

# Teaching and Learning Experiences

## ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE

### ***Major Teaching Emphases***

- Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.
- Foster students' enjoyment of writing.
- Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. creating hybrid texts, refining texts.
- Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.

### **Teaching Notes**

Proficient writers benefit from an environment that fosters independence and self-reliance. Students should feel free to express opinions that may differ from those of the teacher or peers; the environment should enable full discussion and debate about a variety of texts and challenge students to justify, generalise, compare, refer to and evaluate their own writing. Writing experiences for Proficient writers need to promote meaningful engagement and provide challenge and motivation across all learning areas. The focus for developing positive attitudes towards writing as well as a supportive environment for Proficient writers is organised under the following headings.

- Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment
- Fostering Enjoyment of Writing
- Encouraging Experimentation
- Writing as a Social Practice

#### ***Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment***

A supportive environment is one in which both the physical aspects and the culture of the classroom are considered. A positive classroom climate is one in which students have opportunities to use and combine printed, spoken, visual and digital processes. These opportunities contribute to students' willingness and eagerness to write.



## **Physical Environment**

An environment that supports Proficient writers is intellectually stimulating. The type of print available in the classroom ought to reflect both student and classroom needs. It should be functional, frequently referred to, and created in consultation with the students in order to foster ownership and use.

Such print may include:

- suggestions to study particular authors and their associated writing style;
- questions for self-reflection;
- charts and diagrams from across-curriculum areas, e.g. **The Circulatory System**;
- a wide range of text examples, e.g. advertisements, hybrid texts, scripts.

## **Classroom Culture**

As well as providing appropriate materials and a carefully planned physical environment, it is important to also consider how to create a positive classroom writing culture.

Develop such a culture for Proficient writers in any of the following ways.

- Provide opportunities for students to write a wide range of texts for genuine purposes and audiences.
- Encourage students to make informed selections about all aspects of the writing process.
- Provide a range of ICT resources for use in creating texts.
- Have high expectations of students and ensure they know what these are.
- Encourage students to take responsibility for all aspects of writing.
- Establish guidelines where risk-taking is respected and encouraged.
- Allow time for students to share their writing with others.
- Encourage students to read their writing from the perspective of another reader.
- Provide opportunities for students to evaluate their own work and discuss the judgements they have made.
- Incorporate purposeful writing into all learning areas.

## **Fostering Enjoyment of Writing**

It is important for Proficient writers to see writing as a purposeful and worthwhile social practice. Take every opportunity to foster students' enjoyment of writing in the following ways.

## **Proficient Writing Phase**

---

- Provide opportunities for daily independent writing tasks that students can complete successfully and within allocated times.
- Provide multiple demonstrations of the strategies effective writers use.
- Provide opportunities for students to use a range of ICT resources when combining print, images and sound, e.g. computers, software programs, interactive whiteboards, digital cameras, tape and video recorders, scanners, photocopiers.
- Encourage and praise students for attempting to write new forms of texts.
- Provide opportunities for peers to give focused feedback.
- Encourage students to publish their work on-line, e.g. <http://english.unitecology.ac.nz/writers/home.html>
- Share how writers approach writing, including solving difficulties, listening and responding sensitively to students' comments.
- Facilitate learning that promotes independence as a writer.
- Value students as learners and experts, and invite them to share their learning with their peers.
- Assist students to set achievable goals that are based on realistic expectations, outcomes and timelines.
- Recognise and value effort throughout the writing process.
- Tailor instruction to meet individual needs.
- Have a range of software packages available for students to use, e.g. Claris Works, Story Weaver Deluxe, Print Shop Deluxe.

### ***Encouraging Experimentation***

Proficient writers should be encouraged to reflect on ways to improve in selected focus areas and to experiment with all aspects of writing.

This can be done by inviting students to:

- increase the diversity of texts they write for genuine purposes and audiences;
- critically analyse their own writing;
- respond to others' writing by providing focused feedback;
- reflect on and evaluate the success or otherwise of the strategies used throughout the writing process;
- write from another's point of view;
- understand the relationship between writer and reader;
- use a multistrategy approach to spell unknown words;
- experiment with technology to create multimodal texts, e.g. adding images and audio files;
- experiment with colour, font size, style, animation and special effects when using presentation software packages.



## Writing as a Social Practice

The focus when teaching writing in the classroom is to provide many real-world situations that require the use of written language. The ultimate goal is for students to function in society as literate individuals who can use writing to communicate their ideas, share information, stimulate thinking, formulate questions and influence policy and action. Writing applications, petitions, reports, résumés and letters is socially powerful, and it is important that all students understand and are able to use writing to achieve these means.

For further information about Environment and Attitude, see *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning*, Chapter 5: Establishing a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment.

# USE OF TEXTS

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Encourage students to explore and discuss a wide range of literary and informational texts.
- Encourage students to craft a range of literary and informational texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Encourage students to manipulate elements to craft a range of texts, e.g. hybrid texts, multimodal texts.
- Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.
- Encourage students to independently use the metalanguage associated with writing.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for supporting Proficient writers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.

- Exposure to a Range of Text Forms
- Opportunities to Craft a Range of Texts
- Crafting Personal Voice and Individual Style
- Using Metalanguage

### ***Exposure to a Range of Text Forms***

Proficient writers will continue to benefit from ongoing opportunities to read, re-read, interact with and discuss a variety of increasingly sophisticated literary and informational texts. These texts may come from across-curriculum areas, popular culture, the Internet or the community. They could be multimodal, class-made, or published materials presented in a range of formats.

During writing sessions, continue to discuss with students how successful writers craft a range of text forms for different purposes.

### ***Opportunities to Craft a Range of Texts***

Proficient writers are able to write, evaluate and reflect upon their own writing of a variety of texts, but they benefit from continued support in consolidating their understandings and refining their ability to craft texts. To strengthen this ability, encourage students



to manipulate elements within texts, read their writing from another's perspective and make changes where necessary.

Writing sessions provide opportunities to demonstrate, discuss and practise many aspects of writing. These could include any of the following.

- Selecting different text forms for different purposes and audiences.
- Organising and structuring texts.
- Using language features.
- Recognising how organisation, structure and language features of texts can be manipulated.
- Planning, drafting, refining and publishing writing.
- Reading own writing from another's perspective.

Often Proficient writers have developed a personalised writing style and are capable of crafting a wide range of texts. It is important to encourage them to continually broaden the repertoire of texts they write as well as to pursue their own particular interests. This allows them to experiment with different forms and hone their writing skills. There are many ways to extend the repertoire of texts students write.

- Provide a variety of contexts for writing by including writing in all learning areas,
- Provide time for personal-choice writing.
- Collect, read, display and analyse samples of different text forms.
- Collect, read, display and analyse samples of texts in which elements have been manipulated.
- Encourage students to construct frameworks as part of their planning.
- Display and discuss texts that show different writing styles.
- Arrange for authors to visit and discuss their craft.
- Provide time for students to imitate or innovate on different writing styles.
- Encourage students to talk about their writing and to take responsibility for improving it.
- Provide explicit feedback about particular aspects of students' writing.
- Provide opportunities for independent reading and encourage students to read new text forms.
- Provide both a reading and an oral-language program that complement the writing program.
- Provide time for conferences where students can discuss aspects of their writing.

- Set up Author's Chair in and between classes so that students can openly discuss their writing.

## ***Crafting Personal Voice and Individual Style***

Many things — including a writer's purpose, world view, multiple identity and culture — influence voice within text. Voice in writing is defined in numerous ways.

'Writing words that will make readers listen and be affected.'  
(Tony Romano 2004)

'Voice is the imprint of ourselves on our writing.'  
(Don Graves 1994)

'Voice in writing has to do with a unique personality-on-paper.'  
(Ralph Fletcher 1993)

At this phase it is important to help students continue to develop their use of voice. This can be achieved in a range of ways.

- Show and discuss examples of sentences, passages or entire texts that demonstrate voice.
- Share samples of students' writing that have a strong sense of voice.
- Compare the voice in passages of writing. Discuss how it differs.
- Discuss how the author's voice creates interest.
- Read several books by one author and identify the voice, e.g. the style and word choice.
- Model how the choice of language can create or change voice, e.g. formal and informal.
- Discuss how sentence length can affect voice.
- Have students return to journal entries and identify examples in which voice is evident.
- Have students identify and share a passage where an author's voice is strong.

## ***Using Metalanguage***

Students need to be supported in building a vocabulary that they can use to discuss and describe language, their own writing and the writing process. The vocabulary used to talk about language is known as metalanguage, and when students are able to use it to talk competently about their own writing and learning, it helps them to understand how language operates. Developing metalanguage also helps students to understand the support and feedback provided by teachers.



To help Proficient writers continue to use terms associated with writing and written language, it is important to use metalanguage as part of everyday teaching. This can be done across learning areas, as part of targeted discussions, during explicit demonstrations, during one-on-one conversations with students, or as part of planned Modelled, Shared, Interactive or Guided Writing sessions.

Certain terms tend to be more prominent when focusing on different aspects of writing; for example, when working with Proficient writers, consider the use of the following terms.

- Use of Texts: anthology, episodes, synopsis.
- Contextual Understanding: wit, flattery, sarcasm, ideology.
- Conventions: hyperlinks, parentheses, appendixes.
- Processes and Strategies: orthographic, critiquing, analysing.

For further information about the Use of Texts aspect, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn:

- Chapter 1: Use of Texts
- Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

## Involving Students

### 1 Transformations

Completing Transformations provides students with opportunities to practise and reinforce their control of the conventions used in a range of text forms. Transforming one text form, mode or media into another is a way of helping them to develop control of the forms. Students need to be familiar with both the original and the new type of text.

Examples of transformations suitable for Proficient writers include:

- a narrative rewritten as a feature news or magazine article;
- an information report re-created as an electronic presentation;
- an excerpt from a novel re-created as a radio program;
- a fairy tale as a sitcom script;
- a poem re-created as a script for a performance;
- a biography as a website.

Transformations require the student comprehending the original text to create a new text. The texts can vary greatly in degree of difficulty according to the content and form, and degree of compatibility between the original and new form. Although a biography may be familiar to a student, the structure and organisation of a sitcom may not. Similarly, a student may have

used many websites but rarely considered how one might be constructed.

Students attempting transformations require significant support in understanding and manipulating the two text forms. Teachers can best support students with extensive modelling, sharing and guiding.

## 2 What's the Voice?



Inviting students to analyse authors' voices in writing helps to develop an understanding of how to further develop voice in their own texts. Students are invited to analyse a range of texts to identify the way an author talks about a topic, expresses beliefs or feelings and reveals personality through the text.

- Review the meaning of 'voice' in writing.
- As a whole class, brainstorm a list of words that could be used to describe an author's voice. Record responses on class chart, e.g. humorous, authoritative, lively, engaging, pretentious, personal, chatty, aloof, chummy.
- Provide small groups with a range of short texts. These should include pieces that have examples of strong voice.
- Invite students to discuss each text and identify the voice of the author. Direct them to use the What's the Voice? format to record the best words to describe the author's voice, providing examples of linguistic devices and vocabulary to justify responses.
- Have students work in pairs to share pieces of their own writing, then use adjectives to describe their own voices when writing.

First Steps: Second Edition Name: <u>Sandy Salter</u> Writing Strand Date: <u>April</u>		
<b>What's the Voice?</b>		
Use the following table to record your analysis of author's voice in each of your texts.		
Name of Text	Words to Describe Author's Voice	Where I Saw This in the Text
Golden Pavilions - Robert Brunton	sincere thought provoking	But what we do to this rusty old girl can affect our soul.
Huckleberry Finn - Mark Twain	strong, humorous	You don't know about me, without doubt you have read a book by the name of ...
Home - Jayne Anne Phillips	passionate engaging	Mom I say, Maybe he's just I'm not.

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**Figure 9.2**



### 3 Hidden Sentences

Refer to Chapter 8: Conventional Writing Phase, p. 239.

### 4 Responding to Texts

Refer to Chapter 8: Conventional Writing Phase, p. 240.

### 5 Dictogloss

To complete Dictogloss, students record key words and phrases as they listen to a short piece of text being read to them. They then work collaboratively to clarify or add information before working in pairs or small groups to reconstruct a version of the original text that contains the main messages.

- Read the selected text aloud at normal speed, inviting students to listen for key words that will help them reconstruct the text in their own words.
- Re-read the text aloud, pausing at appropriate places and again inviting students to record key words and phrases.
- Have each student work with a partner to compare notes, clarify, and add information if necessary.
- Invite each pair to then work with another pair to repeat the sharing, adding and clarifying process.
- Provide time for students to use their combined notes to reconstruct the text in pairs, small groups or individually.
- Invite students to share their completed Dictogloss with a group or with the whole class.

### 6 Little More Conversation



Inviting students to have conversations about texts read may encourage others to discuss and write a wider range of literary and informational texts. Little More Conversation provides a context for students to refine their language and be able to talk about texts. They complete a Text Conversation Card after exploring a selected text.

- After reading a text, invite students to determine a rating for it. Then, on a Text Conversation Card, they record the rating, write a descriptive comment and identify the key characteristics. This card can then be used as a focus for conversation with other students.
- Provide time for students to work in pairs or small groups to have conversations about the chosen texts.

*First Steps: Second Edition*

*Sarah Donet*

#### Little More Conversation Card

I rated A Thousand White as Excellent because I loved the premise of the book, the female characters that were created involved such a broad mix of people.

It's about

a conversation that took place in real life between the President of the U.S. & a chief from a Native American tribe who suggested that the President should give him 1000 white women & he would give the Pres. 1000 horses.

Key characteristics of this text are

the author creates distinctive voices for each of the characters, written as a diary, descriptive setting

Signature S. Donet

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Figure 9.3

## 7 Simply the Best

In Simply the Best, students are challenged to collect pieces of text or whole texts that constitute the best examples of a given criterion, such as the best setting, factual description, dialogue, excitement build-up, voice or ending. Each student must present the chosen piece and justify its selection. Students can then vote for overall best in the entire collection.

- Provide the challenge and the time for students to collect the single best example of a text or piece of text for the selected criterion.
- Have students read their nominations aloud, using appropriate expression, tone and volume. The reading should be followed by an explanation justifying its choice as an award-winning piece of writing.
- Jointly discuss and record the features of the nominated pieces of texts, e.g. fresh, accurate adjectives, variation in sentence length, believable lines.
- Generate class charts and encourage students to use the list of features when writing their own texts.
- Have the whole class vote on which example is the overall best. The ‘finder’ of the winning nomination receives due credit for discovering the piece of text.

## 8 Written Conversations

Written Conversations (Burke 2000) are an excellent way for Proficient writers to discuss a text through writing. The conversations can focus on many different aspects of the writing process, such as writer’s voice, text structure, text organisation, creation of characters and development of the plot.

Burke suggests the following activities as alternatives to Written Conversations.

### *Journal conversations*

- After students have read a text or texts, have them write in their journals on the selected focus.
- When they have finished writing, each trades with another student who then responds to the writing.
- That student trades once again with another student. This one responds to both of the previous entries.
- Each journal is returned to its owner, who reads what has been written and synthesises the contributions to the written conversation.



### *Chat-room conversations*

- Have each student imagine that a piece of paper is a blank computer screen and everyone else in the class is part of an on-line chat room.
- After reading a text, provide time for students to write on the selected focus.
- Once this is completed, the papers are passed around (writing is anonymous). The class keeps writing, responding and passing on their ‘computer screens’ for as long as is desired.

Students could be asked to write a synthesis of the on-line discussion as a conclusion to the activity. They could also participate in written conversations through a real chat room, threaded discussion, or via email.

### *Fictional conversations*

- Have students create written conversations between any of the following:
  - themselves and an author;
  - themselves and a character or person from a text;
  - characters or people from different texts;
  - people from different times in history.
- Encourage the use of appropriate dialogue and style.

## **9 Design and Create Websites**

Across-curriculum contexts can provide Proficient writers with opportunities to design and create websites for real purposes.

Creating websites encourages writers to compose a variety of text forms, experiment with a range of media and manipulate elements within texts. Proficient writers will benefit from exploring a range of elements used in the construction of effective websites, which may include any of the following:

- experimenting with layout and text elements, e.g. font, bullets, colour;
- use of graphics/sound and video;
- use of internal and external navigation tools, e.g. menus, images, icons, links to other websites;
- inclusion of copyright and contact-person information;
- provision of updated information.

# CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Continue to provide opportunities for students to discuss the choices they have made when crafting texts, such as:
  - text form
  - devices used to influence
  - the representation of people and ideas
  - the representation of characters and events.
- Encourage students to use writing to influence change about social issues that concern them.
- Explore how the ideologies of the writer and the reader combine to create an interpretation of the text.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for helping Proficient writers to develop contextual understanding is organised under the following headings.

- Exploring Decisions Writers Make
- Writing to Influence Social Issues
- Discussing Ideologies

### ***Exploring Decisions Writers Make***

Proficient writers make many decisions when crafting texts, so it is important to provide opportunities for them to evaluate the choices they make and discuss the effectiveness of their writing. To ensure they meet the purpose for writing and the needs of the audience, Proficient writers can adjust the decisions they make throughout the writing process.

Discussions could include asking the following questions.

- What is the purpose of my text? e.g. Am I aiming to entertain, persuade, share personal thoughts, express my discontent?
- Who is the audience for my text? e.g. Have I taken into consideration age, cultural background, socioeconomic status, academic background? Is it a known audience or am I making assumptions based on what I want to say?
- What will the audience expect from my text? e.g. Do they need to read it all or can they pick out points of interest?
- Why have I represented characters, people or facts in a particular way? e.g. Will they appeal to a particular group? Am I presenting a certain point of view?



- How will I publish my text in a way that will best suit my audience and purpose? e.g. Is it appropriate to use hyperlinks, make a poster display, send out a brochure?
- What devices will I use to best suit my audience and purpose? For example:
  - choice of language, e.g. descriptive, emotive;
  - inclusion or omission of details;
  - foreshadowing — giving a hint of things to come, e.g. As the warning alarm sounded everyone rushed to take cover, waiting for the fury of the storm to hit;
  - irony, wit, humour;
  - flashback — interrupting the text to show something that happened earlier;
  - understatement — used to downplay the gravity of a situation, e.g. 'It will be cheap to fix, it's just a slight dent';
  - symbolism — objects used to represent other things, e.g. He sat astride the white stallion, his long white hair, flowing beard and white cloak fluttering in the breeze;
  - stating opinions disguised as facts, e.g. It has been widely reported that . . .;
  - quoting statistics, e.g. 65% of housewives surveyed . . .;
  - selection of evidence and proof;
  - print size;
  - font selection;
  - choice of colour/s;
  - including appropriate amount of detail;
  - size of characters, tables or diagrams relative to others;
  - composition;
  - artistic style.

## ***Writing to Influence Social Issues***

As Proficient writers continue to develop an understanding that writers draw on their social and cultural lives to analyse and represent the world around them, they can be encouraged to write not only about topics that interest them, but also about social issues. Students should be encouraged to maintain involvement in issues that matter — or that bother or confuse them. As part of individual or group social-action projects, students can be encouraged to create a range of texts such as posters, websites, letters to the editor, surveys, petitions and pamphlets.

## ***Discussing Ideologies***

Proficient writers will continue to benefit from opportunities to discuss how their ideologies influence the creation of texts. They

will also benefit from discussions about how readers also bring certain ideologies to the reading of a text, and how this may influence their interpretation.

Facilitate discussion by asking a variety of questions.

- What expertise or authority do you have for writing about this topic?
- What experiences have you drawn upon to create this text?
- What do you know about this topic?
- Why did you choose to represent . . . in . . . way?
- From whose point of view have you written the text? Why did you do this?
- From what other point of view could the text have been written? How would this change the text?
- How do you think your background has affected the way you wrote the text?
- How might readers' backgrounds, experiences and perspectives influence their reading of the text?
- What have you done that will assist the reader to understand and navigate your text?
- What readers will find your text most appealing?
- Are there any groups of readers who would disagree with what you have written?

Writers can also reflect upon trends in their own writing.

- Do I have a preferred style of writing?
- What type of characters do I tend to create?
- What type of settings do I tend to use?
- Do I suggest certain values? e.g. Boys shouldn't cry.

For further information about the Contextual Understanding aspect, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 2: Contextual Understanding.

## Involving Students

### 1 News, News, News!

News, News, News! provides students with the opportunity to explore how one topic can be presented in different ways according to the ideologies of the writer. This is done by inviting students to compare and contrast news articles written about the same topic by different authors. Students then re-create the article from a different perspective, allowing them to see how their ideologies may influence their own writing.



- Provide students with several newspaper articles about the same topic, e.g. reports about a national sporting event written by people from different states. Alternatively, time could be provided for students to access news articles on the web about the same topic from different countries.
- Invite students to read each article and discuss the similarities and differences in the way the information has been reported.
- Allow time for students to explore reasons why the information may have been presented differently. Encourage them to consider the author's identity, country of origin and role or relationship to the topic, and how these may have influenced the text.
- Invite students to select another point of view or perspective from which to report the news item.
- Provide time to create the alternative version, encouraging students to consider what needs to be changed to reflect the ideologies of the perspective chosen.
- Facilitate the sharing of the re-created news articles.

## 2 Panel Discussions

Participating in panel discussions helps students to understand how the ideologies of reader and writer combine to create an interpretation of a text. Panel discussions are based around one text, with members of the panel either presenting their own views or being allocated a different role. The remainder of the class, as the audience, make comments or ask questions of what has been presented.

- After reading a text, select a number of panel members.
- Allocate a role to each member, e.g. the author, a teenager, an elderly lady, a critic.
- Provide time for each member to consider the text from the allocated perspective, then write a short presentation about his or her views of the text.
- During this time, have the audience brainstorm a series of possible questions that could be directed to each of the panel members.
- Invite each member of the panel to present his or her view.
- At the conclusion of the panel presentations, invite the audience to comment on the presentations and to ask individual members questions about what they have presented.
- Lead a discussion in which students can compare the different responses given by the panel members and speculate on how knowledge and experience influence the perspectives taken.

### 3 Text Innovation

Text innovation is the name given to the process of adapting a text created by another author. By completing text innovation activities with a contextual understanding focus, Proficient writers can change the audience, change the setting, adapt characters and their traits or write from a different point of view. When creating innovations, students are able to identify the biases and ideologies of the author. Omissions and contradictions can also become clearer to them.

- Select a text for the innovation.
- Have students read the text several times.
- Select a feature that could be innovated upon. Innovations could involve:
  - changing the gender of one of the characters;
  - substituting new characters for original characters, e.g. the main character becomes a child, an old man, an heiress or a journalist;
  - changing a character's trait/s, e.g. the main character becomes a coward, a fool or a cheat;
  - changing the setting of the text, e.g. from a farm to a restaurant or a political meeting;
  - changing the time of the text, e.g. setting it in the past, present or future;
  - changing the dialogue between characters;
  - changing the sociocultural group, nationality, age, occupation, values or beliefs of the main character;
  - creating an imitation or parody.
- Provide time for students to create the new text.
- Invite several students to read their text innovations to the whole class.
- Have students compare the original text with new versions, justifying which they prefer, and why.
- Identify and discuss how the changes made affected the creation of the whole text.
  - If the nationality of a character changed, how was the language changed to suit?
  - If the beliefs of a character changed, was there any effect on the action or the events?
  - When a character's sociocultural group was changed, how was the text changed?
  - What changes happened when the setting or time of the text was altered?



## 4 Deconstructing Texts

Deconstructing Texts involves Proficient writers in analysing a text, section by section, to uncover the devices that have been used.

Deconstructing texts in this way helps students to understand how ideologies are constructed and communicated, and how they can use this knowledge in their own writing.

Deconstructing activities could include:

- identifying the language of character construction, e.g. nuances, the adverbs and adjectives used;
- identifying the language that evokes the reader's sympathy or antipathy;
- identifying the author's viewpoint and the values being promoted or denigrated by it, and how this is revealed in language choices, e.g. use of pronouns he, we, they;
- comparing sections of different texts by the same author to discover common devices used;
- identifying the devices authors use to communicate mood, emotion and atmosphere in specific passages;
- discussing how an author is positioning himself or herself;
- identifying the language that confirms or modifies previous expectations and interpretations;
- discussing the effects of — and possible motives for — specific revisions in several drafts of a professional writer's work.
  
- Create small groups around previously read texts.
- Challenge students to analyse the texts according to either a self-selected or an allocated criterion (from the list above).
- Provide time for sharing the analysis. Have students comment on the devices that were identified and the impact they had on influencing a reader to take a particular view.
- Encourage Proficient writers to use these devices in their own writing.

## 5 Change the Point of View

Refer to Chapter 7: Transitional Writing Phase, p. 206.

## 6 Waterfall of Thought

Waterfall of Thought is useful in helping students to examine the language use in their texts and to make decisions about which words are necessary and which may be superfluous. It can lead to some excellent descriptive prose writing or poetry.

## **Proficient Writing Phase**

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- Have students write a ‘waterfall of thought’. This means writing about a self-selected or allocated topic for a short time (about 1–3 minutes). It is important that students write without stopping.
- When the time is up, ask students to count the number of words they have written.
- Provide time for them to then cut the number of words in half. To do this, they should cut out any words that they feel are unimportant, repetitive or boring. Only 50% of the words in the original piece of writing should remain.
- Provide time for students to repeat this process, halving the number again so that they end up with only 25% of the original number. The key challenge is to keep the most critical points of the text intact.
- Direct students to transform these remaining words into a piece of poetry.
- Ask for volunteers to share their poems.

## **7 The Real Me!**

Refer to Chapter 8: Conventional Writing Phase, p. 249.

## **8 Who Are You?**

Refer to Chapter 8: Conventional Writing Phase, p. 248.

## **9 Connect and Compare**

Refer to Chapter 8: Conventional Writing Phase, p. 250.

## **10 Writer’s Notebook**

Writer’s Notebook (Bomer & Bomer 2001) provides students with an avenue for recording reflections, observations and thoughts about everyday events or social issues they believe should be addressed. These events may happen at school, in the community or at home; they may be seen on television or read about in a newspaper, and should concern things students feel are unfair or unjust. Students are encouraged to make regular entries in a writer’s notebook about these topics of concern.

Selected entries are then used as a stimulus for creating a plan of action around the topic or issue. Students can work individually or in groups to move forward with their action project by creating various texts for selected purposes and audiences.



	it was awesom!!!
	<p style="text-align: center;">July 17<sup>th</sup></p> <p>On Saturday morning I was at the local shopping centre to meet up with some of my friends. As usual, we met by one of the areas that has seats, outside the arcade. We had been there approximately 10 minutes when a security guard came up and told us to move on. When I questioned him why, he said there was to be no large gathering in the centre, like we were having a party or something!!! I couldn't believe it. Since when did this happen? There were no signs up outlawing this type of thing. I think it was discrimination. I bet if there were a group of old ladies or men, he wouldn't have said anything.</p>

**Letter to the local shopping centre Manager**

Dear Mr Collins,

I am writing as a representative of 15 students from Balik High School. On Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July at 10am, I was with a group of my friends at the shopping centre. We have been meeting every now and again at the shopping centre for the past couple of years. We usually meet outside the food arcade. On this particular occasion, we had been there about 10 minutes when a security guard came up and told us to move on. It is true that we may be there more regularly now as it is cold outside so we don't arrange to meet in the park.

Our concern is that we are law-abiding citizens. We don't swear, shoplift or destroy the property of the centre in any way. Invariably we meet and then grab a bite to eat in the food court and then shop or go somewhere else. Could you please explain to us why we are being asked to move? Is this the same approach you would have to a group of adults who are meeting in the centre? Are we being discriminated against because of a minority within our age group?

Could you please respond to my letter explaining the action of the security guard and any new policies of the shopping centre that we may not be aware of.

I thank you for your time in responding to this matter and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours Sincerely

Stephen Rourke

**Figure 9.4 Student responses to an issue of concern: a notebook entry and an action letter**

## 11 What's the Theme?



What's the Theme? helps students to begin to use writing as a means of addressing social issues or problems. It involves writers in reading a text, analysing it to identify a theme and then making connections between the text and personal life experiences. These connections are used as a basis for writing to induce some form of positive change in real life. The types of themes or issues that might be explored through literature could include crime, gangs, guns, working parents, gender roles, war, peace, separation of families, racial violence or environmental issues.

- Select a text around a chosen social issue or theme, e.g. bombing.
- Have students read the text, then work in small groups to discuss the text and identify the theme or social issue raised.
- Invite them to complete a response sheet, as provided on the *First Steps Writing* CD-ROM. Encourage each student to make a personal connection to the issue raised in the text.

## Proficient Writing Phase

- As a whole class, discuss some possible actions around the issue.
- Provide time for students to work alone or in small groups to create texts for selected purposes and audiences in an effort to bring about some form of change around the issue.

First Steps: Second Edition		Writing Map of Development
Name: Larissa	Date: July 28th	
<b>What's the Theme ?</b>		
TEXT TITLE: Religions of the World - Islam in Focus		
The important issue or theme in this text is... raising the awareness of the Islamic culture.	I was surprised by ... the connectedness between all religions of the world. Often they are portrayed in opposing beliefs.	
The perspective presented in this text is... there are many perspectives presented because numerous people are interviewed, however overall a well balanced and moderate view is presented.	A personal connection about this issue to my own life is... to be cautious about making assumptions of others based on their culture and religion.	

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Figure 9.5



# CONVENTIONS

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Encourage students to take responsibility for extending, refining and using new vocabulary.
- Reinforce to students their obligation to use spelling and grammar that is appropriate to the context.
- Continue to teach students how to compose cohesive paragraphs and coherent texts.
- Encourage students to build their knowledge of different text forms as required.
- Continue to explore texts where combinations and adaptations of conventions have been used.

## Teaching Notes

The focus for supporting Proficient writers in this aspect is organised under the following headings.

- Building Vocabulary
- Understanding Conventions of Spelling and Grammar
- Building Text-Form Knowledge

### ***Building Vocabulary***

All students, when they arrive at school, already have an oral vocabulary based on the speech variety and experiences at home. Research has shown that vocabulary acquisition is crucial to academic development (Baker, Simmons & Kameenui 1998), so it is important for teachers to ensure Proficient writers have every opportunity to expand their vocabulary across a broad range of contexts and experiences.

### ***Developing Vocabulary***

Reading provides models of rich language that help students to learn many new words, and writing provides authentic contexts for them to use those words and develop ownership of them.

Proficient writers can be supported in developing their vocabulary in the following ways.

- Modelling the use of language in different contexts.
- Introducing new subject-specific vocabulary across the curriculum, e.g. the language of history.

- Encouraging students to seek direct or vicarious experiences. Direct experiences can be gained from taking field trips or excursions, manipulating materials or interviewing guest experts. If direct experiences are not possible, vicarious experiences such as viewing, further reading, or speaking and listening can be encouraged.
- Discussing written words at every opportunity, pointing out the author's choice and why it is the 'best fit' in the context.
- Involving students in meaningful problem-solving activities, word games and investigations.
- Encouraging the use of new vocabulary.
- Providing opportunities for students to read and write a range of texts for different purposes and audiences.
- Immersing students in a range of texts.
- Using a rich vocabulary in all contexts.
- Developing language across all learning areas, e.g. history.

### ***Building a Bank of Words That Are Automatically Spelt and Used***

At all phases of development students copy, recall and have-a-go at spelling words during independent writing. The bank of words that can be automatically spelt and used can be made up of high-frequency words, personally significant words, topic or theme words, or signal words. Exploring and using these words in reading, writing and any across-curriculum activities will help to reinforce their recognition and use.

### ***Understanding Conventions of Spelling and Grammar***

Proficient writers have reached a stage in their writing development where they are able to make decisions about use of the conventions of spelling and grammar. These writers have a strong sense of purpose and audience, and are able to adjust the use of conventions to enhance impact; for example, students may use any of the following in their crafted texts.

- Eye dialect, e.g. 'It's gonna be touch 'n go'.
- Non-standard spelling, e.g. eezy, kwik.
- Abbreviations, e.g. Maccas, Gazza.
- Unconventional grammatical patterns, e.g. 'I been going to the store'.
- First, second or third person.
- Active and passive voice.
- Unusual punctuation conventions.



Although Proficient writers can make decisions about whether or not to use standard spelling and grammar, they also need to be reminded of their social obligation to use them when appropriate.

In constructing coherent texts, Proficient writers continue to benefit from a focus on developing and refining their understanding of the characteristics of cohesive paragraphs. A text has coherence when ideas in it are related and sequenced in such a way that the reader understands the relationships between them. This includes having a single idea or topic, using an appropriate text structure, and organising a logical sequence of sentences and paragraphs.

Consistency in point of view, verb tense and number are also important aspects of coherence. Proficient writers can explore how coherence in electronic texts is created in ways different from those used for linear texts — for example, with the use of hyperlinks and multiple connections.

## ***Building Text-Form Knowledge***

Students will continue to benefit from reading and writing different text forms, making comparisons with other texts and identifying the defining features of each one.

Continue to provide opportunities for Proficient writers to analyse and discuss different texts to help consolidate understandings about the purpose, organisation, structure and language features of a wide range of texts. Modelled, Shared and Guided Reading and Writing sessions provide an opportunity to focus on combining and adapting text structures and organisational features to create hybrid texts in order to achieve a specific purpose and enhance impact.

Knowledge about text forms includes understanding the purpose, audience, text organisation, text structure and language features of a particular form.

### ***Purpose***

All texts are written and read for a reason. The purpose may be to entertain, as in most literary texts, or to explain, describe or inquire, as in some informational texts. Understanding the purpose of a writing event will assist students to make decisions about text organisation and structure, and the language used.

Students need to be exposed to a range of texts written for a variety of purposes. Proficient writers should create texts for a range of purposes. For a list of forms related to purposes, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 1.

### ***Text Organisation***

Text organisation refers to the way a text is organised — the layout.

Proficient writers can be encouraged to use a range of organisational features to enhance the impact of their texts. These could include:

- diagrams and other visual aids (photographs, graphs, tables, cross-sections);
- indexes;
- glossaries;
- appendixes;
- bibliographies;
- hyperlinks;
- footnotes;
- prefaces;
- forewords;
- homepages;
- legends;
- sidebars;
- sitemaps.

For a list of further organisational features in different texts, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 1.

### ***Text Structure***

Text structure refers to the way ideas, feelings or information are linked within a text. These could include:

- problem and solution
- compare and contrast
- cause and effect
- listing: logical or chronological sequence, collection of details.

Proficient writers will benefit from being exposed to a variety of text forms that use different structures. Whole texts rarely use only one structure; they usually have a combination of several. Proficient writers benefit from understanding the purpose of each part of their texts so that they will be able to select the structure that best suits their needs.

### ***Language Features***

The term ‘language features’ refers to the type of vocabulary and grammar used in a text.

Proficient writers, having a good understanding of the language features of a range of texts, are able to make decisions about whether



to adhere to these features or adapt them for impact. For a detailed description of language features linked to text forms, see *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 1.

For further information about the Conventions aspect, see

*Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn:

- Chapter 3: Conventions
- Chapter 1: Use of Texts.

## Involving Students

### 1 Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy

Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (Rudell & Shearer 2002) is designed to encourage students to take responsibility for extending, refining and using new vocabulary. Every week each student selects a word that he or she wants to study and nominates it for the class list. The words could be selected from any source, including content area or recreational reading, television, conversations or popular music.

- Students nominate words for the class list. In the nomination process, they have to define each word and tell:
  - where they found it;
  - what they thought it meant;
  - why they thought it should be on the list.
- As a class, decide on the words for the week.
- Refine the definitions, and when this is finally established have students record both words and definitions in their vocabulary journals.

Vocab Journal			
WORD	WHERE FOUND	RATIONALE FOR CHOOSING	DEFINITION
ambience	restaurant review in a magazine	liked the sound of the word	a feeling or mood associated with a particular place
gesticulate	drama teacher	End of year production	to make gestures especially when speaking
epitome	newspaper article	great word to use in own writing. Plus mum couldn't read it!	a typical or ideal example
insurgent	elections campaign	Reports we have to complete during election time	a person who revolts against civil authority or an established government
blog	website	Sounded like a silly or make up word.	a website that contains personal journal with reflection

Figure 9.6

## **2 At the End**

At the End is a whole-class activity that encourages students to extend, refine and use new vocabulary. The challenge is for two teams to create sentences that end with specific, allocated words. The object is for one team to stump the other.

- Divide the class into two teams.
- Invite team 1 to provide a word for team 2. They should not use ‘a’, ‘an’, ‘and’ or ‘the’.
- Provide time for team 2 to create a sentence that ends in the allocated word. The sentence should be written on the whiteboard. Sentence stems that can be used generically are not acceptable, as any word could fit at the end, e.g. ‘How do you spell . . .?’ or ‘He said . . .’.
- Score one point for team 2 if they succeed in meeting the challenge of providing a sentence. Team 1 should continue to provide words until team 2 is unsuccessful.
- Invite team 2 to now provide the words for the opposition.
- The challenge can continue until a team reaches a designated score, e.g. the first to score ten points.

## **3 Follow the Lead**

Follow the Lead is a small-group activity that encourages students to refine their understanding of the characteristics of cohesive paragraphs. Collaboratively creating a text that is built up in a cumulative way focuses students’ attention on the need for unity and clarity within and between sentences. Follow the Lead requires students to take turns at adding a sentence to the group’s text. Each additional sentence is written based on a reading of only the one previous sentence.

- Organise students in groups of approximately six.
- Provide them with a topic sentence relevant to an area of study.
- Invite the first person in each group to copy the topic sentence, then to add a sentence without letting the other group members see it.
- Direct the first person to fold the paper so that only the new sentence can be seen and pass it on to group member number two. This member reads the sentence and adds another one that makes sense and is cohesive.
- Provide enough time for each group member to add a sentence to the text. Ensure that students read only the one previous sentence before adding to the text.



- After all group members have added a sentence, ask the group to read the entire text and collaboratively create an ending.
- Encourage students to discuss the cohesion of the completed text and the relationship between the sentences.

## 4 Verbed

Verbed is an activity in which students analyse texts, draw conclusions, and select verbs that best describe or encapsulate the situation or outcome for each character or person. This activity helps students extend their vocabulary and works best with newspaper or magazine articles, short informational texts and literary texts with strong characterisation.

- Have students in small groups read a selected text and list characters or people in it.
- Students then work individually to generate a past-tense verb for each character or person listed.
- Invite students to share and justify their selected words in the group. Have them discuss the words and choose the most effective. Discussion could revolve around:
  - justifying the choice of verb by referring to the text;
  - the vocabulary used by the author;
  - the perspective chosen — through whose eyes are the verbs selected?
- Have groups share their text and selected verbs, providing justification.

After reading a magazine article about the eruption of Mt St Helens, the students selected these words to describe how different people were feeling.

Forest workers — devastated  
 Local residents — unperturbed  
 Tour operators — concerned  
 Vulcanologists — exhilarated  
 Campers — terrified

## 5 Precise Words

Precise Words helps Proficient writers to play with language and find precise words to communicate the nuances of their thoughts. This activity has students selecting words that are similar in meaning, but create different connotations in a sentence or text.

- Provide students with a sentence in which an adverb or adjective has been omitted, e.g. Ron looked up and . . . watched the silent battle of wills in progress.

### Proficient Writing Phase

- Direct students to fill the blank with a suitable word, e.g. *angrily*.
- Have them then generate at least four possible synonyms for the inserted word, e.g. *irately, heatedly, irritably, furiously, crossly*.
- Organise students to work with a partner to share each new sentence and discuss how each different word impacts on the meaning of the sentence.
- As a whole class, discuss how the use of the different words impacts on the text.
- Have students review a piece of their own writing to identify words that do not portray the precise meaning intended.
- Provide time for them to generate alternative words and select the most precise ones to convey their thoughts.

## 6 Meaning Continuum



Creating meaning continua encourages students to look at words and their nuances of meaning. Students also have the opportunity to generate and discuss alternatives to vocabulary presented either in a text or in their own writing.

- Ask students to select an adjective or an adverb from their writing.
- Have them draw a horizontal line, placing the chosen word at the start of the continuum. A word that is opposite in meaning is placed at the other end of the continuum.
- Students then brainstorm and list words related to those at each end of the continuum.
- Have students select several words from this list to be arranged in order along the continuum, beginning on the left-hand side with the word closest in meaning and intent to the specified word and moving along the continuum to the opposite meaning on the right-hand side.

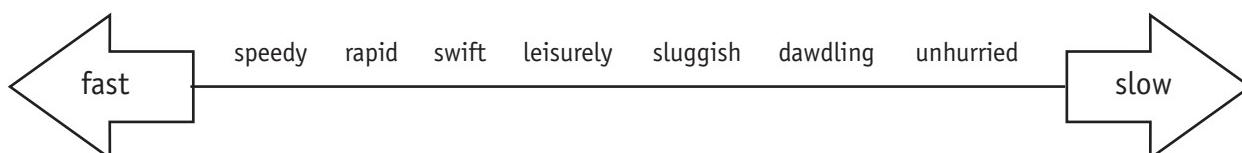


Figure 9.7 A sample continuum

- Challenge students to substitute one or more of the brainstormed words for a word in their original text. Have them discuss the substituted word/s, identifying how the choice of a word can alter the intended meaning.



## 7 Playing with Words

Although Proficient writers have usually gained control of the English spelling system as well as learnt what to do when they cannot immediately spell a word, it is still important to provide a range of relevant challenges that help them continue to expand their vocabulary. Students will benefit from opportunities to refine their spelling knowledge through exploring the way words are combined, extended and changed to suit meaning. The following activities can be used across a range of learning areas.

- Use prefixes and suffixes to form new words from base words, e.g. port: *transport, report, support, portable, important*.
- Group words selected from reading or writing texts according to meaning.
- Investigate the meaning of Latin or Greek roots.
- Identify and explore acronyms such as NASA, Qantas, scuba, Anzac, Unesco.
- Identify and discuss abbreviated words.
- Identify and discuss portmanteau words (words put together to form new words), e.g. *horrible* and *tremendous* form *horrendous*.
- Identify and discuss onomatopoeic words (words that have been created to resemble sound), e.g. *creak, boom, hiss*.
- Identify words derived from people's names or titles, e.g. *cardigan* from *Lord Cardigan*, *pavlova* from *Anna Pavlova*.
- Sort and classify words according to their countries of origin.

## 8 Word Observations



Word Observations (Brand 2004) can be a daily classroom activity that enhances students' power to look closely and systematically at words, be able to talk about word features, and develop the ability to monitor misspellings in their own writing. Students can select a word from their own writing, select a word of interest from another source, or use a word allocated by the teacher.

- Invite students to record a chosen word on the Word Observation sheet provided.
- Review with them the types of observations that can be made about words. The different features can be observed by asking any of the following questions.
  - How many letters are in the word?
  - How many syllables are in the word?
  - What part of speech is the word?
  - Is the word a compound word?
  - Does the word contain any double or silent letters?
  - Is the word plural or singular?

- How many consonants or vowels are in the word?
- Does the word have a prefix or a suffix?
- Does the word have a base or root word?
- Provide time for students to make observations about the chosen word and record the observations on the format provided.
- Provide time for them to share their observations with others.
- Review the importance of re-reading one's writing to monitor misspellings through word observation.

## 9 Translations

Translations is an activity that helps Proficient writers to identify figurative language in texts and translate it into a common meaning, and to speculate on the author's choice and use of these words. Figurative language analysed in this way could include idioms, clichés and similes. Eye Dialect, the use of non-standard spelling to represent the way a person speaks, can also be included. Students often begin to make use of figurative language in their own writing after spending time analysing other work.

- Have students collect examples of figurative language as they come across it in texts. Record these on a chart, noting the type of figurative language and the translation.
- Once several examples have been identified and recorded, invite small groups to search for further examples of a particular type of figurative language, e.g. similes.
- Ask the groups to share examples discovered, providing the text, the identified sentence or phrase and the translation.
- Allow time to discuss the purpose and possible reasons for authors' use of the particular types of figurative language. Add this information to the class chart.
- Encourage students to use figurative language in their writing.

### A class-generated translation chart

Text	What It Said	Translation	Language Feature	What's the Reason?
Poem written by Selina (class student)	Getting to know people is like peeling onions . . .	People have many layers to their personality.	simile	To make it clearer to the audience
Boy by Roald Dahl	His face was as still and white as virgin snow and his hands were trembling.	He was very scared.	simile	To create a vivid image in as few words as possible



# PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES

## Major Teaching Emphases

- Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge.
- Consolidate strategies used throughout the writing process.
- Consolidate spelling strategies.
- Encourage students to be selective in the way they plan for writing.
- Encourage students to refine their texts holistically to ensure they are effective.
- Encourage students to be selective in their choice of publication formats.
- Continue to encourage students to evaluate their effectiveness in retrieving, recording and organising information from texts and to critique own texts.
- Model how to reflect on the writing process and products, and encourage students to do the same.

## Organisation of the Processes and Strategies Aspect

There are several differences in the organisation of the Processes and Strategies aspect. Both the Teaching Notes and the Teaching and Learning Experiences (Involving Students) are located in *Writing Resource Book*, 2nd edn, Chapter 4: Processes and Strategies.

The rationale for these differences is that the processes and strategies of spelling and writing are not conceptually hierarchical and therefore not phase-specific. In all phases, a variety of writing processes and strategies need to be introduced, developed and consolidated.

What varies from one phase to the next is the growth in:

- the number and integration of strategies used throughout the processes of writing;
- the awareness and monitoring of writing processes;
- the efficiency in use of the processes of writing;
- the ability to articulate the use of the strategies used in the processes of writing;
- the awareness of how the use of processes helps with composing texts.

# Supporting Parents of Proficient Writers

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF PROFICIENT WRITERS

Proficient writers control all aspects of writing. They write a wide range of sophisticated texts such as research papers, newspaper articles and hypertexts, and understand how purpose and audience influence writing. Proficient writers are able to convey detailed information and explore different perspectives. They have developed an extensive vocabulary and use many strategies to spell.

### Supporting Proficient Writers in the Home

Proficient writers will benefit from a range of experiences in the home setting. Ideas for providing appropriate experiences are available on Parent Cards located on the *First Steps Writing* CD-ROM. Teachers can select appropriate cards for each Proficient writer and copy them for parents to use at home.



#### Parent Cards

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>1</b> General Description and How to Support Proficient Writers | <b>4</b> Building Understandings about Different Types of Writing  |
| <b>2</b> Writing and Reading Links                                 | <b>5</b> Supporting Project Work — Accessing and Using Information |
| <b>3</b> Supporting the Writing Process                            |  |

Also available on the Writing CD-ROM is a parent-friendly version of the Writing Map of Development.

## CHAPTER 10

# Accomplished Writing Phase

Foundations of Clinical Practice 212

Sian Meyer Group 1  
0320935  
*Is human life sacred? Discuss.*

*Is Human Life Sacred? Discuss.*

Sian Meyer  
0320935

Group 1  
Tutor: Aaron Kent

Increased understandings of the biology of life and advances in the mechanics of sustaining life add renewed vigour to the quest for the meaning of life, and the search for a shared morality. One of the most often asked questions, "Is human life sacred?" plays a major part in many current public forums. Abortion, euthanasia, stem cell research, life support for permanently comatose patients... acquiring a moral stance on any of these hotly debated issues requires some perspective on the sanctity of life.

I shall go on to suggest that there is general widespread underlying fundamental belief that life is sacred. Because of the influence of religion maybe? Our biological make-up? Our historical and evolutionary past? The law? Somehow, the notion of the sanctity of life is well and truly inbuilt in society and human nature; humans everywhere would find it hard to refute the statement that life has unique and distinct value. However, if I choose such a premise for sanctity, and almost go so far as to claim that a definition of life would include sanctity as a defining trait, then there must be some other explanation for the moral dilemmas and great debate that surrounds the aforementioned issues encompassing the sanctity of life. I think this concept of life being sacred shifts from being an inherent value of every human being to being a moral construct when we start to impose conditions upon it. And this is where controversy develops. We can accept life is sacred, but then insert 'human' into the equation, and limitations appear. If human life is of great distinct value, then we exclude non-humans from the same level of respect and reverence by requiring a definition of 'human life'. Although there is a tendency to conform to common understandings of what it means to be human, there are already several of those, and if morality is entirely subjective, then we can see there is potential for infinite number of definitions of what it means to be human, far as there is infinite number of lives. Debate about whether or not we hold human life sacred is therefore unavoidable as long as there are so many varying perceptions of what exactly human life is. Yes, we can agree something is sacred; it is just far harder to reach a shared understanding of what exactly that something is.

The concept of human life is possibly best defined by looking at some of its proposed boundaries. Such definition would, by necessity, encompass a view of what makes us human. Lawrence Becker identified two propositions about the boundaries of human life that have direct bearing on the moral controversy that surrounds this issue:

- 1 - That there is no decisive way to define, in purely biological terms, either the point at which a human life begins, or the point at which it ends
- 2 - If the end points are going to be used as moral divides, they should be defined in terms of religious or philosophical characteristics, not purely biological ones." (Becker, 1998)

He then however attacks these propositions, and poses alternative biological boundaries, and the notion that for moral theory such biological boundaries are in fact more useful. But biological or moral people everywhere have their own understanding of the boundaries of life, influenced by a number of spheres: religion, legality and the widely accepted view of their society. There is, therefore, much debate over where life begins, and what is an appropriate stage to consider its endpoint.

### The beginning of life: conception or birth?

The debate over the beginning of life has two major sides – those who believe life starts at conception, and those who believe it starts at birth. There are some arguments for life starting at various points during foetal development, but their principles fall mainly into one or the other of the major poles, so for the confines of this essay I will focus on the conception vs birth debate. The point of contention is the becoming/being boundary. Those in favour of birth as the starting point of life use the analogy that in the same way a caterpillar is not a butterfly, a human foetus is not a human, merely a developing human. Humans come into being by way of a process, and being in the process of becoming a human is not, they claim, the same as being a human. (Becker, 1998) The question to be answered then is at what point do we decide that the process of 'becoming' is complete? Followers of this so-called 'metamorphic' school of thought suggest that this division can be set no earlier than the beginning of the eighth month of gestation, because this marks the average end of generative development. There is also no need to set it any later than the final month of gestation, because the development going on thereafter falls into the refinement and maturation category, rather than being essential to life. (Becker, 1998) So by these biological prescriptions, human life begins when on a purely physical basis one is in possession of all the traits that marks them a member of the species homo sapiens. Abortion is acceptable up to a certain stage in development by this argument, because it would not involve killing a human.

### WEIGHING OUR HEROES

If we lined up all our Australian heroes on a set of scales, and gave weight to their level of fame, and their remuneration, no one would be surprised when the scales tipped resoundingly in favour of the sporting field. But it does make one wonder if sportsmen really are such a cut above our other successful individuals, or is the imbalance a product of a nation who places too much emphasis on sporting heroes? Perhaps there's some hidden trait that sportsmen alone possess that makes them more worthy of public adoration and the corresponding salary than their artistic, or humanitarian counterparts.

In our search for this elusive difference, it is useful to ask what qualities draw Australians to their idols. Since Gallipoli, the ANZAC legend has been very much a part of our national identity. The qualities those young men personified are embedded in the Australian psyche, and even today dominate our idea of a true Blue Aussie hero. Their spirit of mateship, larrikinism, determination and work ethic live on in our idols. No one can doubt the mateship present when one of our AFL teams run onto the field, or their determination and hard work at training. Similarly our test cricket side, currently dominating the world, embodies these qualities we associate with legends. It is no wonder Don Bradman is such a part of our nation's history, and one imagines our present side will also live on in youngster's dreams for a long time. Idolised, admired and inspiring, our sports stars are well-paid, well-travelled, and well-supported by government funding at the elite level. And so the scale tips...

Yet what if I was to nominate another set of people who embodied this ANZAC legend, choosing, for arguments sake, not another sporting team, but one of our symphony orchestras. The bonding, unity and teamwork we find in an orchestra is just as great as we observe at the MCG. Their talent is no less than any athlete you care to mention, and the practice and dedication required to perform at the highest level puts their determination and work ethic in the class of any of our Olympic competitors. Or take as another example one of our charity groups, filled with volunteers who make sacrifices and work together to perform miracles. One can't deny they are as much heroes as our sporting stars. The difference is non-existent. Yet the aforementioned organisations pay much less than our well paid sportsmen. They struggle to find funding, and there is little support for their development. Far more people can name the captain of the West Coast Eagles than can identify the Western Australian Symphony Orchestra's concertmaster, or president of the Australian Red Cross.

It's hard to question the hero-status of our Pats, Ians and Cathys, but easy to challenge the millions of dollars they receive in funding and sponsorship. There are stars in other fields who are just as deserving of the support and recognition those names call to mind. The only imbalance seems to lie in social perspective. So, until our scales are once more straight, Australia remains a country that puts too much emphasis on our sporting heroes.

By Sian Meyer

Figure 10.1

## Global Statement

*Accomplished writers are able to make critical choices about all components of writing — including style, vocabulary and content — as they craft a wide range of texts. They are able to develop complex ideas, sustain coherence and present information clearly. Writers in this phase reflect on, evaluate and critique their own writing to ensure that they have achieved their specific purpose for the intended audience.*

# Accomplished Writing Indicators

## Use of Texts

- ◆ Controls the crafting of a large repertoire of texts.
- ◆ Critiques own texts by evaluating the information retrieved, recorded and organised.
- ◆ Is able to write using a dispassionate style that conceals personal bias.
- ◆ Is able to write using an emotive style that makes ideas more appealing.
- ◆ Writes with conviction, using a strong personal voice.
- ◆ Uses the metalanguage associated with writing.

## Contextual Understanding

- ◆ Makes critical choices about the composition of a text based on an analysis of the purpose and the intended audience.
- ◆ Consciously provokes positive or negative responses through the representation of characters and events in literary texts.
- ◆ Consciously provokes positive or negative responses through the representation of people and ideas in informational texts.
- ◆ Selects devices designed to enhance impact or to influence a particular audience.
- ◆ Recognises how one's values, attitudes and beliefs impact on the composition of a text.

- ◆ Accommodates or resists the likely expectations of particular audiences.

## Conventions

- ◆ Deliberately selects words to convey meaning economically and precisely.
- ◆ Accurately spells a wide range of words.
- ◆ Consciously selects sentence structure and associated punctuation to achieve impact.
- ◆ Organises ideas and information clearly, sustaining coherence throughout texts.
- ◆ May choose to deviate from the conventions of writing to enhance impact.

## Processes and Strategies

- ◆ Consciously adds to semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge as required, when writing.
- ◆ Selects appropriate strategies to use throughout the writing process.
- ◆ Accurately spells, using a multistategy approach.
- ◆ Competently uses an extensive range of processes to plan, draft and refine writing.
- ◆ Makes critical choices about the publication of texts based on an analysis of the purpose and the intended audience.

**Major Teaching Emphases** and **Teaching and Learning Experiences** are not provided for this phase as Accomplished writers are able to take responsibility for their own ongoing writing development.

# Glossary

active voice	the subject performs the action, e.g. <b>The factory caused the pollution</b>
adjective	a word that adds information to a noun or a pronoun
adverb	a word that gives information about a verb, an adjective or another adverb
affix	a morpheme that changes the meaning or function of a root word or stem
alliteration	the repetition of the initial sound in consecutive words, often used to create tongue twisters
analogy	drawing a comparison in order to show a similarity in some way, e.g. <b>operating a computer is like the working of the brain</b>
analysing	a teaching and learning practice involving the examination of the parts to understand the whole
anthology	a collection of literary works
antonym	a word with the opposite meaning to another
Author's Chair	an opportunity for students to voluntarily share their writing and receive constructive feedback
automaticity	bringing information to mind with little or no effort because a skill or understanding is so well known
base word	a word to which affixes may be added to create related words
bias	a prejudiced view or a one-sided perspective
blurb	a short piece of writing, often on the cover or jacket of a text, designed to interest the reader in the product
brackets	markers used in writing to surround words or thoughts
chunking	the process or result of grouping or reorganising smaller units into larger more meaningful ones
clause	an expression including at least a subject and a verb
colon	a punctuation mark used to introduce more details about something that has already been stated
compound sentence	two or more simple sentences joined with a conjunction, e.g. <b>Jason hit the ball and ran to first base</b>
compound word	a word as a single unit of meaning but consisting of two separate words, e.g. <b>sunshine, butterfly</b>
context	the broad linguistic, social and cultural experiences that are brought to a situation
Contextual Understanding	an aspect of writing that involves an understanding of how the context affects the choices made by the author and illustrator, and the interpretation by the reader



## Glossary

Conventions	an aspect of writing that focuses on the structures and features of texts, including spelling, grammar, pronunciation and text layout
critiquing	appraising critically by examining, reviewing and giving a judgement
cue	a signal or prompt
derivative	a word formed by adding to a root or stem, e.g. <b>disrepair</b> , <b>repaired</b>
device	a technique used by authors and illustrators to influence the construction of meaning, e.g. <b>simile</b> , <b>font</b> , <b>print size</b>
drafting	the process or result of putting ideas into writing in a rough form, often edited later for publication
editing	the process of refining writing at the sentence level
ellipsis	a punctuation mark consisting of a series of dots that shows something has been left out.
evaluating	making judgements from data gathered
eye dialect	use of non-standard spelling to give the impression of colloquial or uneducated speech, e.g. <b>gonna</b> , <b>hafta</b> , <b>bin</b> (been)
first person	writing from the point of view of the main character
genre	category of written texts, such as literary or informational
graphophonics	the study of sound–symbol relationships
Guided Writing	the provision of scaffolded support to a group of students with similar needs
homographs	words that are spelt the same but pronounced differently and have different meaning, e.g. <b>tear</b> and <b>tear</b> , <b>minute</b> and <b>minute</b>
homonyms	words that are spelt the same and pronounced the same but have different meanings, e.g. <b>scale</b> (fish), <b>scale</b> (music)
homophones	words that are pronounced the same but spelt differently and have different meanings, e.g. <b>here</b> and <b>hear</b> , <b>aisle</b> and <b>I'll</b>
hybrid text	a text consisting of a combination of forms
hyperlink	a link from one hypertext file to another location or file, usually activated by a highlighted word or icon
hypertext	machine-readable text that is not sequential, but is organised so that related items of information are connected
ideology	the body of ideas that reflect the beliefs, values, symbols and devices of a doctrine, social movement, class or large group, e.g. <b>socialism</b>
idiom	an expression that does not mean what it literally says, e.g. ' <b>pay through the nose</b> '

## Glossary

Independent Writing	the independent application of previously learnt writing understandings, processes and strategies to own texts
indirect speech	a report of something said or written, e.g. Peter said it was not the right thing to do
information and communication technology (ICT)	the study of the technology used to handle information and aid communication
informational text	a text that is more factual than creative in nature presenting information in an ordered way, e.g. a report, a biography, a recipe
Interactive Writing	a teacher-managed process in which teacher and students compose and construct texts collaboratively with a 'shared pen'
invented spelling	the result of an attempt to spell a word whose spelling is not already known, based on the writer's knowledge of the spelling system and how it works
irony	a figure of speech in which the literal meaning of words is the opposite of their intended meaning; also a literary technique used to imply, through plot or character, that the situation is actually different from that which is presented
Language Experience	to use a shared experience as a basis for jointly constructing a text
language features	the grammatical structures and word selection appropriate for different text forms
literary text	a fictional form of text, such as a narrative
Major Teaching Emphases	teaching priorities appropriate to phases of development
metalinguage	language used to describe and analyse natural language; language about language
metaphor	a figure of speech in which a term or phrase is used to equate one thing to another to which it is not literally connected, e.g. 'The road was a ribbon of moonlight ...'
mnemonic	a device, such as a formula or a rhyme, used as an aid in remembering.
Modelled Reading	a reading procedure typified by the teacher selecting and reading a text to students and thinking-aloud selected processes being used
Modelled Writing	the explicit demonstration of writing behaviours and verbalisation of the thinking processes used by effective writers
multimodal texts	texts utilising more than one format, i.e. visual, spoken or written
noun	a part of speech that names or denotes persons, places, things, qualities or acts

## Glossary

onset	the part of the word preceding the rime ( <i>see rime</i> ): usually the consonant or consonant cluster that precedes the vowel, e.g. 'tr' in truck
orthographic knowledge	knowing about the spelling of words in a given language according to established use
paraphrasing	rephrasing in another way something either spoken or written
parentheses	punctuation marks that bracket or enclose texts
passive voice	the subject receives the action, the verb often preceding the words 'by the . . .', e.g. <b>The pollution was caused by the factory</b>
phoneme	the smallest sound unit of speech, e.g. /k/ in cat
phrase	two or more words in sequence, forming a grammatical expression but not containing a finite verb, e.g. <b>in the kitchen after midnight</b>
point of view	the stance an author has chosen to take that is revealed through devices used in the text, e.g. <b>words and actions in a literary text or information included or omitted in a factual text</b>
prefix	an affix added to the beginning of a word, e.g. as in <b>unhappy, rewind, antibiotic</b>
preposition	a word that shows the relationship of one word in a sentence to another word
Processes and Strategies	an aspect of writing involving the application of knowledge and understandings to comprehend and compose texts
pronoun	a word that takes the place of a noun, e.g. I, we
proofreading	reading a text and marking corrections, particularly those at the word level, such as in spelling and punctuation
refining	the process used to improve draft writing, e.g. <b>revising, editing and proofreading</b>
revising	the process used to refine draft writing at the whole-text and meaning level
rhyming couplet	a stanza of two rhyming lines of the same length
rime	a vowel and any following consonants of a syllable e.g. 'ip' in 'trip'
root word	the basic part of a word that carries the meaning, e.g. <b>read, health</b> ; a foreign root is the basic part of a word that carries the meaning but originates in a foreign language, e.g. <b>auto, manus</b>
scaffolding	strategic leads, prompts and support given to students in the form of modelling, sharing, guiding and conferencing with the aim of developing autonomy
semantics	study of the meaning of language
Shared Reading	an interactive reading procedure in which students see the text, observe a good model (usually the teacher) reading and are invited to read along

## Glossary

Shared Writing	a teacher-managed process in which a piece of writing is composed and constructed collaboratively with the teacher acting as scribe
sidebar	a short, often boxed news story that is printed beside a longer article and that typically presents additional, contrasting or late-breaking news
signal words	words associated with text forms and text structures, signalling relationships between ideas in the text, e.g. therefore, before, though, because
simile	a figure of speech making a direct connection, e.g. as brave as a lion, as white as snow
simple sentence	a sentence with one subject and one object, e.g. Jason hit the ball
site map	a textual or visual index of a website's contents
stereotype	a perception conforming to a set image or type based on culturally dominant ideas, e.g. boys are tough, old people are a burden on society
strategy	the mental processes you use to do something you want to do
suffix	an affix attached to the end of a base, root or stem that changes the meaning or grammatical function of the word
synopsis	a brief summary
syntax	the formation of sentences and the grammatical rules that govern this formation
text	any communication from which meaning is gained, e.g. books, videos, Internet website, conversation
third person	the grammatical category of forms that designate a person or thing other than the speaker or the one spoken to
topic sentence	a sentence intended to express the main idea in a paragraph or a passage
Use of Texts	an aspect of writing involving the composition and comprehension of texts
verb	a word that shows action or being
wit	the ability to perceive and express in an ingeniously humorous manner the relationship between seemingly incongruous or disparate things
word stem	the part of a word to which a suffix is or can be added

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